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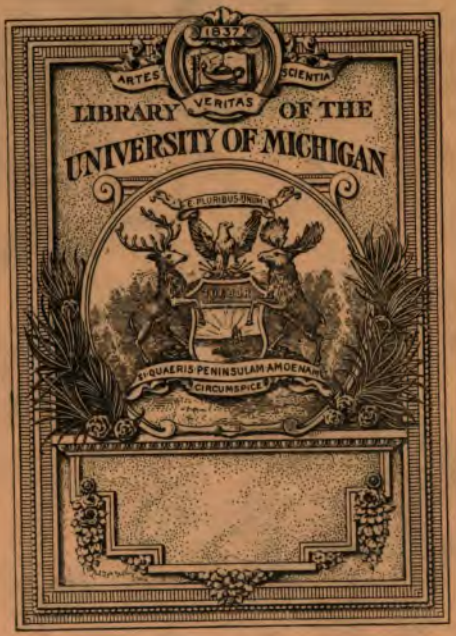
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THE MIDLAND REVOLT AND THE INQUISITIONS OF DEPOPULATION OF 1607

By EDWIN F. GAY

Read May 19, 1904

I

THE opinion has recently been expressed by a competent student of the sixteenth century that the inclosures of that period, both those which turned the old open fields into sheep farms, thereby evicting husbandmen from their holdings, and those which hedged in severalty the common pastures, were almost entirely responsible for the greater revolts which occurred under Tudor rule.[1] Mr. Pollard specifies this cause of social discontent as mainly operative in the Pilgrimage of Grace, Wyatt's rebellion and that of 1569, as well as those of 1549, both east and west. Such a view ascribes, I think, an exaggerated importance to the inclosing movement of the time and fails to take due account of the combination of motives, political, religious, and social other than agrarian, which acted concurrently, though often at cross purposes, upon all classes, high and low, of a people which was passing reluctant and uncomprehending through an agitated era of transition. The thread of inclosure discontent, it is true, may be traced more or less plainly in these popular uprisings, but as only one of a tangled skein. Yet it is certainly a hasty generalisation, which, laying emphasis on this single element in a complex problem, declares that the masses who took part in all these rebellions were composed of 'men who had been evicted from their tenements or who had been ground

[1] A. F. Pollard, *England under Protector Somerset*, 1900, pp. 205–210.

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down to the verge of poverty by the loss of their rights to common—men who had nothing to hope from the existing social condition, and nothing to lose in case of failure.'[1]

A closer examination will show that inclosures played an appreciable part, as one of the agrarian grievances, only in portions of the revolts of 1536 and 1548–9, and even in these it was not the characteristic inclosure of the period, that of the open fields, which is most prominent, but the much older and long-continued inclosure of commons, while the rebellions of 1554 and 1569 show scarcely a trace of agrarian motive. It was not until 1607 that resentment expressed itself unalloyed with other motives against the depopulating inclosure of the common fields, in a hitherto inadequately chronicled revolt which swept for a brief period through some of the midland counties.

During the greater part of the Pilgrimage of Grace the spirit of opposition to the inclosures or 'intacks' from the common waste, which was embodied in one of the demands of the rebels at Doncaster,[2] made little noise and was easily held in check by the gentlemen leaders of the insurrection.[3] It was not until after the second Doncaster conference, when the main revolt was broken, that, as the end of the rebellion trailed off to the 'high and wild countries' of the north, the anti-inclosure feeling, coupled with bitterness at the increase of 'gressoms,'[4] found vent in the casting open of parks and

[1] *England under Protector Somerset*, 1900, p. 240.

[2] *L. and P. Hen. VIII.* xi. 1246, art. 13. It was demanded that the statute for inclosures and intacks be put in execution, and all inclosures and intacks since 4 Hen. VII. be pulled down 'except mountains, forests, and parks.' In the mass of evidence collected on the causes and course of the rebellion the confession of Wm. Stapulton, one of the rebel captains in Yorkshire, alone mentions in addition to the intacks the 'pulling down of towns and husbandries' (*ibid.* xii. i. 392). One small case of hedge-breaking is mentioned (xi. 960).

[3] The oath of the Yorkshire rebels had expressly forbidden them to 'doe any displeasure to any private person' (Stow, *Annals*, ed. 1605, p. 967), and the council of the rebel leaders at York took order against the 'casting down of inclosures of commons' (*L. and P. Hen. VIII.* xi. 1155 (2, ii.), xii. i. 6, 901).

[4] The resentment at the increase of fines or 'gressoms,' especially in the north-west, seems to have been greater than that aroused by the inclosure of commons. See the proclamation of the rebels, 'Claim ye old customs and tenant right to

closes.[1] The special grudge on this score against the Earl of Cumberland made the Duke of Norfolk reluctant to entrust him with the wardenship of the Marches.[2] Norfolk himself, while roughly stamping out the later leaderless rebellion, expressed his pity for 'the poor caitiffs' who had been 'so sore handled' by gressoms and increasing of the lords' rents by inclosings.[3] The split between the gentlemen and the commons, observable at the close of the Pilgrimage,[4] had also largely contributed to end the earlier fortnight's fiasco of the Lincolnshire rising which had ushered in the greater Yorkshire rebellion.[5] We may, indeed, suspect that the King's instructions to Norfolk, under their fair show of conciliatory words, by enjoining the reception of complaints against inclosures, were deftly intended to widen the breach between the confederated classes in the north.[6] But during

take your farmes by a God's penny, all gressums and heghtnynges to be laid down' (*L. and P. Hen. VIII.* xi. 892), and Article 9 of the Doncaster demands (xi. 1246; cf. also 1080). Cromwell's 'extreme assessment of ther fynes' was mentioned by Aske as one of the grounds of popular hatred against him, so intense 'that in maner they wold eat him, and extemys ther greves only to aryse by him and his councell' (*ibid.* xii. i. 6, in extenso *Engl. Hist. Rev.* v. 340).

[1] *L. and P. Hen. VIII.* xi. 1081, 1296, 1337, xii. i. 136, 163, 1361.

[2] *Ibid.* xii. i. 319, 919.

[3] 'What with the spoiling of them now and the gressing of them so marvelously sore in time past and with the increasing of lords' rents by inclosings, and for lack of the persons of such as shall suffer, this border is sore weked and specially Westmoreland; the more pity they should so deserve, and also that they have been so sore handled in times past, which, as I and all other here think, was the only cause of this rebellion,' *i.e.* of the later risings (*ibid.* xii. i. 478. See also 687, 914, and the complaints of the previous year, xi. 1080).

[4] Of the willing co-operation of the gentry with the commons before the Doncaster conference there is abundant evidence, but afterwards it was possible for Ralph Sadler to report that 'everywhere on this side Doncaster bills have been set on church doors urging the commons to stick together, for the gentlemen had deceived them' (*ibid.* xii. i. 200). This is confirmed by Norfolk (xii. i. 336).

[5] *Ibid.* xi. 971. The sense of betrayal by their leaders animated the cry of the commons: 'Kill the gentlemen' (xi. 975).

[6] 'One ground of the late rebellion was that certain lords and gentlemen have enclosed commons and taken intolerably excessive fines.' The Duke is to receive complaints, inquire who have been most extreme and moderate between them, so that 'gentlemen and yeomen' may live together as they be joined in one body politic' (*ibid.* xii. i. 98). Similar instructions to the Earl of Sussex for Lancashire (xii. i. 302, (4)).

the greater part of the revolt opposition to inclosures had been subordinated to the ill-will excited by the religious changes,[1] an ill-will in which all classes heartily united. The commons responded only too readily to the instigations of their priests,[2] and, though their loyalty was not unmingled with distrust, recognised the claim of their traditional dependence upon their leaders, the nobility and gentry.[3] Aske's statement as to the causes of the rebellion of which he was the captain mentions the grudge against Cromwell[4] and the desire for the abolition of the Statute of Uses.[5] He was voicing however not merely the grievances of the leaders but the general discontent when he emphasised the hostility to the religious innovations, to the royal supremacy, and above all to the suppression of the monasteries. This last, he declared, was 'the greatest cause of the insurrection which the hartes of the comens moste grudged at,' since 'in the north partes much of the relef of the comyns wais by sucor of abbeys.'[6]

[1] That a bitter opposition to the religious changes was the dominant motive is apparent in the numerous statements as to the cause of the rising. See, for example, xii. i. 29, and several of the articles both from Lincolnshire and Yorkshire (*L. and P. Hen. VIII.* xi. 705, 1246, 553, 585, 780, 853) and the oath taken by the insurgents (xi. 705 (4), 1059 (ii.)).

[2] The clergy are described as the 'greatest corypers' of the temporality, the secret occasion of all this mischief (*ibid.* xi. 1371). They were active in both the Lincolnshire and the Yorkshire risings (xi. 972–5, 1047). See the instances cited by Sir Wm. Fairfax (xii. i. 192).

[3] In Lincolnshire 'the poor men were content to be ordered by the gentlemen who might have stopped the insurrection' (*ibid.* xii. i. 70). Sir Brian Hastings wrote that the captains of the rebels were 'the worship of the whole shires' from Doncaster to Newcastle, except the Earls of Cumberland and Westmoreland (xi. 759). Aske declared that 'the commons would have none but the nobility here to rule' (xi. 1128), and the Pomfret meeting shows this leadership (xi. 1209).

[4] We find the gentlemen explaining to the Lincolnshire commons that Cromwell is a 'false traitor and deviser of all the false laws' (*ibid.* xii. i. 70, p. 38). For the popular hatred aroused against him see also xi. 841.

[5] The article against the Statute of Uses was put into the Lincolnshire demands at the request of the gentlemen, the commons knowing little what it meant (*ibid.* xii. i. 70, pp. 37–9). If it had not been included among the Lincolnshire articles, Aske thought it would not have been remembered in Yorkshire (xii. i. 901, p. 406).

[6] *Ibid.* xii. i. 6, 901 (and *Engl. Hist. Rev.* v. 558). The monasteries, according to Aske's statement, also lent money to gentlemen, took charge of

In truth the northern monasteries seem still to have retained some of their mediæval vitality, still to have met social needs no longer to the same extent felt for them or satisfied by them in the more advanced south. Together with the general religious embitterment and the political [1] and class resentment stirring the gentry the commons were influenced not only in some degree by agrarian discontent, but also in large measure, as in the rebellions of the fifteenth century, by the dread of new fiscal exactions.[2]

The same cross-play of motive is noticeable in the wide-spread outbreaks of 1548–9. When at a time of general dearth and distress Protector Somerset initiated his well-intentioned but politically fatuous anti-inclosure policy, his gaping after the fruitless breath of the multitude, as Hayward puts it,[3] could have but one result; his 'lenity and softness'[4] invited a popular uprising in which diverse elements of disaffection were intermingled. Inclosure riots had apparently

evidences and money, were a convenience in disposing of younger sons and n educating daughters, and were great maintainers of sea-walls, highways, and bridges. The ballad on the Pilgrimage of Grace emphasises the charity of the abbeys; the poor had of them 'Beithe ale and breyde At time of nede, And succer grete In alle distresse' (printed in *Engl. Hist. Rev.* v. 345). Norfolk declared that this indiscriminate almsgiving bred vagabonds (*L. and P. Hen. VIII.* xii. ii. 14).

[1] *Ibid.* xi. 1182 (2), 1244.

[2] Aske said that the rumours of increased taxes were 'not in question among the people' in Yorkshire (*ibid.* xii. i. 901), but there is much evidence that they played a large part in fomenting disorder in both Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. The fullest statement concerning them speaks of the suppression of churches with the confiscation of church jewels, a rigorous assessment, the sealing of cloth, payments on weddings, buryings, and christenings, on unmarked cattle, and on the eating of white bread, geese, and capons. 'These things slanderously reported through the country make every man think they shall be undone for ever' (xi. 768 (2), and see xi. 534, 567, 826, 841, 892, xii. i. 369, 393). These bruits were attributed to 'the traitors of the clergy' (xi. 650, 1047, xii. . 481). The Lincolnshire rebels required 'that the king shall not now or hereafter demand any money of his subjects except for defence of the realm in time of war' (xi. 585).

[3] Sir John Hayward, 'The Life and Reign of Edward VI.,' in Kennett's *Hist. of Engl.* ed. 1719, ii. 289.

[4] Letter of Sir Wm. Paget to Somerset, July 7, 1549 (Strype, *Eccl. Mem.* II. ii. 420, ed. 1816).

been breaking out some time[1] before the appointment in May 1548 of Somerset's first inclosure commissioners. These at once directed their attention to the midland counties, the chief seat of the depopulating attack on the open fields. They had been at work barely two months when riotous levellings of inclosures were heard of in Buckinghamshire,[2] followed by sporadic risings in other parts of the country. The commission had been empowered only to investigate; the people proceeded to act. Partly by persuasion, partly by force, their impatience was quelled, but again early in 1549 the outbreaks were renewed and again suppressed throughout a large part of southern England.[3] By May it was found advisable to issue a proclamation against these 'tumultuous assemblies of lewd persons.'[4] About a month later an order was issued to the gentlemen of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Berkshire for the putting down of possible commotions in their counties.[5] In the necessity of maintaining public order the government was forced to fall back, as usual, for its sole support in such an emergency upon the class whose misdeeds the inclosure commissioners had just been laying bare. But here in the midlands the complexion of revolt had altered. While in 1536 the dominant religious

[1] John Hales in his defence says that long before the commission of 1548 there was 'an insurrection in Hertfordshire for the comens at Northall and Chesthunt' (Introd. to the *Discourse of the Common Weal*, ed. Lamond, p. lviii). Early in 1547 we hear of recent disorders 'in many places of the kinges realme' (letter of the Council to the Justices of the Peace, 8 March, 1547, *Hist. MSS. Comm.* vii. i. 605).

[2] Letters between Somerset and Hales, August 1548 (*Lansdowne MS.* 238, ff. 318 b, 319b–321 b).

[3] King Edward's account is that during the third year of his reign 'the people began to rise in Wiltshier, where Sir William Harbert did put them downe, overrun, and slay them. Then they rose in Sussex, Hamptshier, Kent, Glocitershier, Southfolk, Warwickshier, Essex, Hartfordshier, a Pece of Leicitershier, Worcestershier, and Rutlandshier, where by fair purswasions, partly of honest men among themselves, and partly by gentlemen, thei were often appeased, and again, bicause certain commissions wer send downe to plucke down inclosures, then did arise again' (*Literary Remains of King Edward VI.* ed. Nichols, ii. 225–7).

[4] Proclamation of May 22, 1549, *S. P., Dom.*, Edw. VI. vii. 18.

[5] *S. P., Dom.*, Edw. VI. viii. 9.

motive of the northern rebels had been crossed at the end by agrarian grievances, in the midlands in 1549 a movement which had commenced with hostility to inclosures came ultimately under the control of anti-Protestant influences.[1] 'Here in Bucks and Oxfordshire,' writes Somerset on July 12, is a stir 'by instigacon of sondery priests for these matyers of religion.'[2] The gentlemen who had been entrusted with the task of restoring order were busy hanging priests upon their parish steeples.[3] By August 7 an Oxford correspondent of Bullinger was writing that 'the Oxfordshire papists are at last reduced to order, many of them having been apprehended and some gibbeted, and their heads fastened to the walls.'[4] From Rutlandshire and Leicestershire comes word in September of trials and executions.[5] This rigorous suppression made effectual end to the distracted Midland rebellion. Lord Grey's doings in Oxfordshire, wrote Sir Thomas Smith admiringly, were worth ten thousand 'proclamations or pardons for the gettyng the people.'[6]

Meanwhile in the south-west and in the eastern counties more serious risings were in progress. Along the southern

[1] Somerset's letter of June 11, 1549, to the Marquis of Exeter and the Earl of Huntingdon shows the religious motive for revolt gaining the upper hand over the agrarian: 'Whereas in the most partes of the Realme sundry lewd persons have attempted tassemble themselfs and first seking redresse of enclosures have in some places by seditious prests and other yvill peple set forth to seke restitucons of tholde bluddy lawes and some fall to spoil to prevent all inconvenyences w^t yowe pray yo to cause the proclamacons sent herw^t to be published by the sheriff w^ch shal w^thstand yvel Brutes, for yorself and the gentlemen of the shire of Leycestre by y^r admonicons.' (*S. P., Dom.*, Edw. VI. vii. 31.)

[2] Somerset to Lord Russell (printed in Pocock, *Prayer Book of* 1549, Camden Soc. N.S. 37, p. 26, from the *Petyt MSS.* no. 538, vol. 46). A letter of July 18 informs Russell that Lord Grey has 'chased the Rebells of Bucks, Oxfordshire, and these partes to their houses and taken cc of them' (*ibid.* p. 29).

[3] Order of July 19, 1549, prescribed by Lord Grey for the execution of rebels in Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Northamptonshire (*S. P., Dom.*, Edw. VI. viii. 32). The places mentioned in the order are confined, however, to Oxfordshire.

[4] *Zürich Letters*, 1st ser. vol. ii. p. 391 (Parker Soc.).

[5] The Earl of Huntingdon to the Earl of Shrewsbury, September 12, 1549; *Talbot Papers*, A, 415 (printed in Lodge, *Illustrations*, 2nd ed. i. 163).

[6] Sir Thomas Smith to Cecil, July 19, 1549 (*S. P., Dom.*, Edw. VI. viii. 33).

coast the people were astir in 1548 and the following year. During the summer of 1548 there was an outbreak in Kent, where 500 villagers, we are told, laid open a field inclosed by the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports.[1] The town authorities of Canterbury sent to the Council for artillery to use against 'the rebellyous that lay bysydes' the city.[2] Commissioners were sent down to pacify the Kentishmen[3] and the inclosure disturbances were quieted by midsummer,[4] only to appear again the following summer in the south-eastern counties.[5] At the other end of the south

[1] *Spanish Chronicle of King Henry VIII.* ed. Hume, p. 169. The author, a Spanish merchant, writing in London about 1550, says the London butchers laid the blame for the high meat prices during the scarcity on inclosures, specifying the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports and Sec. Paget, the former for taking in 'all the commons in Kent,' and the latter in Northamptonshire. Godwin calls Kent 'the Fountain of this General Uproar' (*Annals of Engl.* ed. 1675, p. 134). Evidence of anti-inclosure activity in Kent is furnished in a suit brought concerning Boxley Park and a neighbouring wood, inclosed by order of Sir Thomas Wyatt about 1543–4. This was 'not throwen open in the tyme of rebellion of comen welthe,' but 'twoo parcels of lande belonging to Newenham Courte were then cast open and throwen downe by the people in that rebellion w'in the parishe of Boxley' (*Exch. K. R., Barons' Depositions*, no. 815).

[2] 'Records of the City of Canterbury,' *Hist. MSS. Comm.* ix. i. 154. (Cf. article by Thos. Wright in *Archæologia*, xxxi. 211.)

[3] Memoranda of July 18, 1548, addressed to the Lord Protector by E. Wotton and others, commissioners in Kent (*Hist. MSS. Comm., Lord Salisbury's MSS.* i. 54). The articles of the Kentish rebels, here mentioned, are unfortunately not preserved. Godwin says the commissioners caused the inclosures to be thrown open (*Annals*, p. 134).

[4] *Acts of the Privy Council*, i. 567.

[5] A Council letter of July 10, 1549, to Russell, putting the best face on things, represents the disaffected of Suffolk, Essex, Kent, Hants, and Surrey as confessing their faults 'with verie lowlye submission,' and ready to fight the rebels of the west. But another letter of July 22 to the same acknowledges that 'no lenger then yesterdaye sume of the Countres hereabouts, as Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, and Kent, were not in so good ordre and Quiet as we wold wyshe.' Their articles were apparently 'to have one man to have but one ferme lands at theyr owne parych, and such lyke' (Pocock, *op. cit.* pp. 24, 31–2). Sir John Markham writes, August 1, 1549, to the Earl of Rutland from the Court that in the 'generall plage of rebelling' 'Kent, Sussex, Essex, and all the parts near London have meekly confessed their folly and pray for the king's most gracious pardon' (*Hist. MSS. Comm.* xii. iv. 42, *Rutland MSS.* i.). An echo of disaffection in Hertfordshire comes from a Star Chamber case of 5 Edw. VI., where a constable deposes that 'at the tyme of the last rebellion . . . he durst not execute his office, for he was arrestyd twyse in the Marischalsy for executyng his office upon

coast commissioners were likewise in 1548 putting down in Cornwall a revolt, not agrarian but religious in its character.[1] Early in 1549 fresh uprisings were taking place in another section of the south-west, beginning in Wiltshire and Somersetshire and thence spreading eastward.[2] These seem to have been animated in large measure by hostility to inclosures of parks and commons,[3] but there are signs in Hampshire, as in the midland movement, of Papist stirrings.[4]

one that had offendyd the kyngs lawes at that time' (P. R. O., *Star Chamber Proc.* 7/53).

[1] The first Cornish rising was in April 1548, but was speedily suppressed and a proclamation of pardon made (May 17) to all but thirty ringleaders (*Cotton MSS.*, Titus, B. ii. f. 25). On June 3 the commissioners were ordered by the Council to proceed to the execution of the traitors, 'albeit some of them thoughte the nomber appointed to be executed there was over greate' (*Acts of Privy Council*, ii. 554). The *Black Book of Plymouth* notes that this first insurrection was 'pacified by the gentylmen of the countrey with small troble, but then certaine of the chyff of the comens were hanged, drawn, and quartered' (*Hist. MSS. Comm.* ix. i. 277).

[2] The beginning was in Wiltshire, according to the King's Journal (above, p. 272, n. 3), but in John Hales's account the risings of 1549 commenced in Somersetshire, thence entering Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Hampshire, Sussex, Surrey, Essex, and Hertfordshire, as well as affecting the midlands (Introd. to the *Discourse*, p. lviii). Holinshed adds Lincolnshire to the list (*Chronicle*, ed. 1808, iii. 917).

[3] On May 15, 1549, the Council was bidding the Hampshire sheriffs and justices to employ the power of the shire with vigour for the suppression of turbulence, since they had heard that 'sondry light folks of the counties of Somerset and Wiltshire have attempted to stirr in great companies upon pretence of libertie proclamacions against enclosures' (*Hist. MSS. Comm.* xi. iii. 116). A later Council letter (May 26) to the mayor of Southampton dates the outbreak of 'mysorder' in Hampshire (*ibid.*). John Paston writes, May 25, to the Ear of Rutland details of the Wiltshire rising. 'Ther ys a grete number of the commonse uppe abowte Salssebery in Wylleshere and they have pluckyd downe Sir Wyllyam Harberde's parke that ys abowte hys new howse, and dyverse other parkysse and commonse that be inclosyd in that cuntre, but harme thay doo too parson (nobody). Thay saye thay wylle obaye the Kynges maister and my lord Protector with alle the counselle, but thay saye thaye wyll nat have ther commonse and ther growendes to be inclosyd and soo taken from them. . . . Ther is neyther gentylle man nor yet a man of any substance as furforthe as I can lerne amoynge them' (*Hist. MSS. Comm.* xii. iv. 36, *Rutland MSS.*).' Holinshed has it that 'in Summersetshire they brake up certaine parks of Sir William Herbert and the lord Sturton.'

[4] The clerical animus of Hampshire disaffection is illustrated in the depositions of Blakman and Sylver against John Garnham of Winchester, August 12, 1549. Garnham said, 'We have ten thousand now in a Redyinesse for Flynte he will

Not so easily suppressed were the greater and better known risings of the extreme south-west and the east, which broke out in June and July respectively. The commons of Devonshire and the Cornishmen, who soon joined them, were thoroughly incensed at the liturgical and other religious changes, and, incited by the clergy and abetted more or less openly by at any rate a portion of the gentry,[1] collected in formidable numbers. It was only by the assistance of mercenary troops that Lord Russell was in August able to crush their stubborn resistance. Sympathetic disaffection had been plainly shown in neighbouring counties, and the usual gruesome epilogue of executions was enacted in Somersetshire as well as in Devonshire and Cornwall.[2] In

bringe a greate sight of them oute Sussex and we shall have all the bishoppes tennaunts full and hole. And all the countrie rounde abowte will repaire unto us, for I knowe there is not one of the bishoppes servaunts but if he have xii^{d} we shall have vi^{d} of yt. . . . We shall have all the Ayde of the prestes on the close (at Winchester) and we shall have money inough' (*S. P., Dom.*, Edw. VI. viii. 41).

[1] Hooker says the western rebels 'hade the countenance of some such of the beste, as whoe did both favour their cause and secrietly encoraged them' (Life of Sir Peter Carew, printed in *Archæologia*, xxviii. 116). In his account of the rebellion he specifies some of the gentlemen and yeomen who were willing 'to be capteins and guiders'—in Devonshire Sir Thos. Pomeroy, knight, John Bury and 'one Coffin,' gentlemen, and in Cornwall Humphrey Arundell and Winneslade, esquires, and Holmes, a yeoman (in Holinshed, ed. 1808, iii. 944). Others of good birth are mentioned in the correspondence between Lord Russell and the Council; Robert Paget, brother of Sir William Paget, for instance, was declared by Somerset 'to have been an heade and captyon of rebellion' (letter of August 11, with other letters referring to the same in Pocock, *op. cit.* pp. 53, 55, 62, 74). Sir John Arundell's loyalty was in question before the Council (*ibid.* pp. 23, 26, 28). At the beginning of the outbreak the justices of the peace with their retinues outnumbered the rebels, but were inactive, probably, as Hooker suggests, because some of them 'did not like the alteration (of religion), as it was greatlie suspected.' This suspicion was shared by Lord Russell, who in his letters to the town authorities of Exeter ascribed the chief blame for the rebellion to 'the lacke of suche aide and assistaunce as the gentelmen of the country shoulde have geven' (Cotton and Woollcombe, *Gleanings relative to the History of Exeter*, p. 191). He declared that 'a greate many' of the citizens of Exeter, 'of good wealthe and substaunce,' showed their 'synister affeccons' in the cause (*ibid.* p. 192). Mr. Pollard goes too far when he says that there was not a peer, 'not even a knight' or a man of wealth, implicated in the western rebellion (*op. cit.* p. 239).

[2] Russell had informed the Council that he could raise but 1,000 footmen from Dorset and Somerset, because of the 'evill inclynation of the people,' the

the major revolt of the south-west the motive was undoubtedly religious. There was an insignificant undercurrent of grudge against the gentry, evidenced by one of the rebels' articles which demanded a limitation in the number of gentlemen's servants.[1] And there was the same fear of increased taxation which was present in 1536, fomented apparently in this instance by the western clothiers as well as by the 'popyshe prests.'[2] But no word of agrarian complaint is audible.

rebels bragging of 40,000, 'to set on your backs out of those shires' (Pocock, pp. 32, 40). Bury and other Devonshire leaders after their defeat attempted 'to stir up Somersetshire and have gotten them a band or camp, but they are set after' (Somerset to Sir Philip Hoby, August 24, 1549, printed in Strype and more correctly in Burnet, *Hist. Ref.* ed. Pocock, v. 250). The account for 1549 of Sir John Thynne, sheriff for Somersetshire and Dorsetshire, contains his expenses in executing rebels at Frome, Wells, Shepton Mallet, Glastonbury, Milverton, Wyllyscombe, Dunster, and Exford. By reason of pardon to offenders at Wells, North Currey, and Bridgewater, he notes the loss of money he had paid for the 'irons to hang them with' (P. R. O., *Exch. Mem. L. T. R.*, 3 Edw. VI. p. ii. m. 177 d).

[1] Art. 13 of the second set of articles. 'It appeareth plainly,' said Cranmer in his 'Answers to the Fifteen Articles of the Rebels,' 'that you devised it to diminish their strength, and to take away their friends, that you might command gentlemen at your pleasures. . . . Will you now have the subjects to govern their king, the villains to rule the gentlemen, and the servants their masters?' (Parker Soc. ii. 185.) Among the charges against two of the Cornish rebels, themselves entitled 'Esquire' and 'Gentleman,' were that 'they imprisoned divers knights, esquires, and gentlemen of Cornwall, crying out, "Kill the gentlemen and we will have the Act of Six Articles up again and ceremonies as were in King Henry the Eighth's time"' (*Baga de Secretis*, pouch xvii.; *D. K. Fourth Report*, App. ii. 221).

[2] Letter of Council to Lord Russell, June 29, 1549, concerning the rumours current in Devonshire, that 'after the payment for shepe they should paie for theyr geese and piggs and such like.' He is to declare that these rebels 'be wonderfully abused, and that by the provocation only of certain popyshe prests' (Pocock, *op. cit.* p. 16; similar account as to the reports spread by the priests in Holinshed, p. 924). One of the articles of the 'Supplication' of the rebels of Devon and Cornwall, answered July 8 (this article not found in either of the two sets of articles preserved in Holinshed, pp. 918–9, and in the answers of Cranmer and Nicholas Udall), prayed for dispensation from 'the reliefe granted unto us by the Parliament, of cloth and shorn sheep' (Tytler, i. 182). The Council were inclined to grant this, but were dissuaded by Russell. They were, however, of contrary opinion to him in regard to the clothiers, by whose action the Council held (August 27) that 'this sparke of rebellyon toke the kyndling' through 'theyr malignimity at the relyefs pulling a waye of theyr workmen, ye and pryvie insencing and encouragment' (Pocock, pp. 61–2, 66). The 'reliefs' referred to were those on sheep and woollen cloth granted by Edward's second Parliament

The banners of the insurgents bore not the plough, as in some other risings, but the 'Holy Sacrament.'[1] The cause of the rebellion, according to Hooker, the 'testis oculatus,' 'was onelie concerning religion.'[2]

In the eastern counties the tenacious opposition to change was directed not to the conservation of the familiar church ceremonial but to the preservation of long-exercised common rights. In the petition of the eastern rebels there were five demands which touched on these rights;[3] their first activity in Norfolk was the levelling of the fences about an inclosure of common at Attleborrow,[4] and the contemporary references to the grievances of these rebels emphasise this type of inclosure as the prime cause of the rising. 'The greatest griefe,' said Lever in this connection, 'that hathe been unto the people in thys realme, hath bene the inclosing of commons.'[5] Cranmer, in his sermon on rebellion, admitted that there had been much complaint against gentlemen and rich men 'that take the commons from the poor,' but that was no excuse, he urged, for the rebels to take all things, 'both the common and the proper.'[6] The excesses of the 'camping time' on Mousehold Heath,[7]

(2–3 Edw. VI. c. 36) and promptly repealed in the next parliamentary session in response to the complaints of the clothiers (3–4 Edw. VI. c. 23).

[1] *Spanish Chron. of Henry VIII.* p. 181. One of the banners of the Lincolnshire rebels of 1536 bore the plough, the chalice and Host, the five wounds, and the horn of Horncastle (*L. and P. Hen. VIII.* xii. i. 70 (xiii)). See the description of these flags in the homily against rebellion (*Homilies*, ed. 1595, sig. Oo 3).

[2] Holinshed, p. 926.

[3] Printed in F. W. Russell, *Kett's Rebellion*, pp. 48 ff.

[4] Hayward, *The Life and Reign of Edw. VI.*, in Kennett, ii. 296.

[5] Thos. Lever, *Sermon in the Shroudes*, 1550 (Arber reprint, p. 39).

[6] Cranmer, *Works* (Parker Soc. ii. 195).

[7] A case before the Star Chamber illustrates this side of the revolt. The crown tenants of Leyston, Suffolk, complained against Robert Brown that he had deprived them of their commons, that he was overrunning the land with his flock of sheep and his 'connyes.' The defendant set forth the agreement as to the use of common which had been duly observed by himself and the tenants 'untyll the Campyng tyme, that is to saye about the monyth of Julye last past,' when the complainants riotously depastured their cattle, 'as though all wer ther own,' and compelled the defendant's wife 'to vytell the Rebels.' His family were obliged to take refuge three days and nights in the woods (P. R. O., *Star Chamber Proc.* Edw. VI. 4/7).

to which Cranmer referred, were, however, soon stopped. Lord Russell's bloody victory over the Catholic rising in the west was followed by Warwick's equally decisive check to the agrarian rebellion of the east. In the same month a parish clerk and a few yeomen headed a slight outbreak, soon suppressed, in Yorkshire,[1] and for some time afterwards the Council was engaged in treading out the smouldering embers of insubordination in various parts of the country.[2] But the fears of a general conflagration were allayed; the gentlemen were masters of the situation. There had been in reality however, but little danger of a fatal result. The movement lacked all unity of purpose or execution.[3] The rebels of the west wanted the old religion, those of the east were apparently not unfriendly to the new;[4] the yeomen and husband-

[1] Stow, *Annals*, ed. 1605, p. 1006; *Lit. Remains of King Edw. VI.* p. 228. See also Somerset's letter to Sir Philip Hoby of August 24, 1549, referred to above (p. 276, note 2).

[2] Commotions in the west, in Nottinghamshire, Kent, and elsewhere durin 1550 (*Acts of the Privy Council*, iii. 6, 31, 35, 198, 225, 256, 262, 272, 295; iv. 45, *et al.*) Men from the Boulogne garrison were distributed in Dorsetshire, Hampshire, Sussex, Essex, Kent, and Suffolk (*ibid.* iii. 81). In 1550 one John Higgins was indicted at Hereford for inciting others to break up inclosures, saying that by the king's proclamation all inclosures were to be broken up (*Hist. MSS. Comm.* xiii. iv. 317). An insurrection was prevented the following year in Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, and Rutlandshire (letter of Sir John Harrington to the Lord Admiral, September 2, *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, *Lord Salisbury's MSS.* i. 92).

[3] The confusion of motive is well portrayed in Somerset's letter to Sir Philip Hoby, August 29, 1549: 'The causes and pretences of these uproars and risings are divers and uncertain, and so full of variety almost in every camp (as they call them) that it is hard to write what it is; as ye know is like to be of people without head and rule, and that would have that they know not what: some crieth, Pluck down inclosures and parks, some for their commons; others pretendeth religion; a number would rule another while and direct things as gentlemen have done; and indeed all hath conceived a wonderful hate against gentlemen, and taketh them all as their enemies' (Burnet, *Hist. of the Reformation*, ed. Pocock, v. 251). Hales mentions the divergent causes of the insurrections (Introd. to *Discourse*, p. lvii).

[4] The Princess Mary wrote to Somerset from Kenninghall, Norfolk, in self-defence 'that all the rising about the parts where she was, was touching no part of religion' (Strype, *Eccl. Mem.* ii. i. ch. 21). She was referring, of course, to Roman Catholicism; several of the articles of the eastern rebels are animated by zeal for Reformed ideas, for 'the woorde of God' (Russell, *Kett's Rebellion*, pp. 49, 51, 53).

men of Norfolk and Suffolk demanded the restoration of their threatened common pasture land, but this demand was not voiced in the Devonshire rebellion. This distinction between the risings of the east and west is well known and obvious enough;[1] in view, however, of the confident assertion that in the west 'the inclosure of their commons was a more potent irritant with the agricultural labourers than the alteration in the form of their belief,'[2] the observation must be made that in those western counties—Devonshire and Cornwall—where rebellion was most stubborn there is very little evidence of inclosing of any kind,[3] that it is misleading to speak of the rebels as only agricultural labourers or men 'with nothing to lose,'[4] and that it scarcely does justice to the popular religious feeling of the time in this section of England to

[1] This distinction has not always been clearly made. While, as we have just noticed, the Council was erroneously suspecting the Princess Mary of instigating and abetting a revolt for the old religion in the east, it was, under equal misapprehension, sending inclosure proclamations to pacify the rebels of Devonshire and Cornwall (Pocock, p. 17; letter of June 29; cf. letter of July 4 to Paget at Brussels, p. 24). Stow, Grafton, and Cooper say that the Devonshire rising was not only against inclosures, 'but they were chiefly offended with the alteration of religion' (Stow, *Annals*, ed. 1605, p. 1005; Grafton, *Chronicle*, ed. 1809, p. 514; Cooper, *Chronicle*, ed. 1565, f. 345). Godwin likewise confuses the two movements. Drayton thinks the Cornish rebellion was 'call'd Inclosures to cast downe' (*Polyolbion*, ed. 1672, pt. ii. p. 62), while Lingard represents the conscience of the Norfolk rebels revolting against the new service (*Hist. of Engl.* ed. 1849, v. 290).

[2] Pollard, *op. cit.* p. 239.

[3] An examination of a large number of inclosure cases before the Star Chamber discloses but few instances in these two counties, four in Cornwall, and three in Devonshire, and these are for inclosure of common pasture or small cases of hedge-breaking. Among the proceedings of the Court of Requests I have noted no cases of inclosure from Cornwall and but one from Devonshire, where in the manor of Byckelegh and Shagh the tenants were inclosing small parcels of the waste (*Proc.* 3 Ed. VI. 16/4). Both these counties belonged to the old inclosed districts of England, and the only new inclosure here possible, that of the common pasture or waste, seems at this period to have been inconsiderable.

[4] Mr. Pollard, in his excellent book on Henry VIII., in describing the Pilgrimage of Grace, again reverts to this notion that 'the rebels were drawn mainly from evicted tenants, deprived of their holdings by inclosures or by the conversion of land from tillage to pasture, men who had nothing to lose and everything to gain by a general turmoil (*Henry VIII.* 1902, p. 237). Many of the impoverished and the dregs of society would undoubtedly welcome these turmoils, but to make them the chief, or even important, elements in the greater

describe the conservative countryman as indifferent to the church ceremonies and associations which were interwoven with the chief concerns and hopes of his life.[1] It is worth noting also that though we hear in the east of opposition to common inclosure and farm engrossing the rebellion seems to have evoked here no complaint against the depopulating inclosures of the open fields. Such complaint was confined to the midlands, yet even in this centre of inclosing activity was not strong enough to dominate the movement. Here, distracted between the cross currents of motive, the revolt was but an impotent congeries of local riots.

revolts of the sixteenth century seems to me a plain misreading of the evidence. We have a glimpse of this propertyless class at the close of the Pilgrimage, when the movement was no longer so well under the control of its leaders. Sadler, for example, reports from his northern journey in January 1537 that 'he found men in the bishopric (Durham) very desirous of quiet, except those who had nothing of their own and might gain by robbery' (*L. and P. Hen. VIII.* xii. i. 259); and Sir Henry Savile writes at the same time from Lancashire that 'from Sawllay Abbey northwards those who have little are still wild' (*ibid.* p. 281). But even in poor Westmoreland and Cumberland the goods of the 'poor caitiffs' executed for the later rising amounted to some 400 marks (*ibid.* p. 641). In the depositions after the rebellion each class seems anxious to cast the blame on some other, but it is clear that all were involved in the main rising.

To prevent the spread of the western rebellion in 1549, the Council sent down proclamations for Cornwall, Somersetshire, and Dorsetshire for the forfeiture of the lands, copyholds, and goods of all who, after a certain date, should remain with the insurgents, 'the matyar of copiholds being so generall a leving to the nomber of those shires, shalbe as moche a terror as anye other thing that can possibly be devised.' This measure, it writes, 'will be some stay to those ready in Cornwall to join the rebels; if not, put it in execution, which will draw them back' (Pocock, pp. 32, 33). The Council writes later, September 10, explaining the intention of these proclamations, and disapproving Russell's gifts of the rebels' lands and goods to his soldiers, since 'by these gifts the multitude of the common people seinge ther lands and goods geven from them, wer therbye made the more desperate' (*ibid.* pp. 68–71). Nicholas Udall, writing as a countryman of the rebels, warns them that in the rebellion 'your substance and catall is not only spoiled and spent upon unthriftes . . . your houses falle in ruin,' and more to the same effect ('Answer to the Commoners of Devonshire and Cornwall,' printed in Pocock, p. 145). This certainly does not point to the desperate poverty of the rank and file.

[1] The Reformers frequently inveigh against the conservative clinging to the old faith among the common people. John Hooker speaks of the unpopularity of the Reformation preachers in the west and of the 'obstynauncie of the people . . . so miche addicted to the Popishe religion' (Life of Sir Peter Carew, *Archæologia*, xxviii. 116, 147).

There was, perhaps, a demand for the restoration of pasture land at the time of Wyatt's rebellion,[1] and irritation, both in connection with increased rentals and fines[2] and with decay of tillage,[3] in the north, but so far as I have been able to examine the evidence I can find no reason to doubt the dominantly religious and political character both of the Kentish rising of 1554 and the equally futile northern rebellion of 1569. The discontent of Protestant south-eastern England with Mary's policy[4] was paralleled fifteen years later by the

[1] Peter Martyr writes to Bullinger from Strasburg, February 24, 1554, the news there received of Wyatt's rebellion. 'The army in encampment,' it was reported, 'make three demands of the Queen: 1, that a king shall be chosen of English blood; 2, that the religion that flourished under Edward shall continue to be in force; and 3, that all the pasture lands which had been forcibly seized by persons in power shall be restored' (*Zürich Letters*, 1st ser. ii. 514).

[2] Grindal, Bishop of London, writes to Cecil in 1563, asking that the poor tenants of 'that little angle where I was born, called Coupland, parcel of Cumberland, the ignorantest part in religion, and most oppressed of covetous landlords, of any one part of this realm to my knowledge,' be not left subject 'to the expilation of these country gentlemen' (*Remains of Grindal*, Parker Soc., pp. 256–7). The surveyors of the rebels' lands in the north report in 1570 that the Earl of Northumberland had 'taken sore fines of his tenants for things of small value' (*Cal. S. P., Dom.*, Eliz. vol. vii. p. 288). 'The country people,' they add, 'have been sore taken on, what by their Lords in taking great fines for their lands, the spoil lately made by the armies, and compositions made by men for their lives, . . . so the people seem to be in much obedience, though they talk of some of their countrymen somewhat at large for their hard dealing with them' (*ibid.* p. 290). After completing their survey in all the northern counties they comment again on the 'great fines,' the land being let 'so that no ground in our country is dearer' (*ibid.* p. 307). Among the arguments supporting a Bill, proposed in 1571, for the confirmation of tenant right in Cumberland was that if fines were certain, thus removing the fear of the landlord, the tenants would not be led by their landlords to rebellion, 'as lately by Leonard Dacre' (*ibid.* p. 348). But one of Leonard Dacre's retainers had just been urging him to raise fines on his tenants, saying that if he made himself a popular landlord in other respects 'they will not think much of their rent doubling' (*ibid.* p. 225).

[3] As examples of the decay in the tillage in the north which aroused the concern of the government (see p. 294, n. 2), I note the depopulation of Ross, Northumberland, by conversion to pasture shortly before 1561 (Raine, *N. Durham*, p. 19), and the threatened evictions at Nesbit (*Hist. MSS. Comm.* xii. iv. *Rutland MSS.* i. 79.

[4] The Earl of Arundel, writing to the Earl of Shrewsbury, Jan. 28, 1554, says, 'The cause of this insurrection, as they bruit in all these places, is the Queen's marriage with the Prince of Spain' (Lodge, *Illustrations*, i. 233). The Queen herself in letters of Jan. 25 and Feb. 1554 to the Council of the

Catholic reaction in the north-west against Elizabeth;[1] a marriage question in both cases brought in a political

Marches, and through this Council to the sheriff and justices of Shropshire, declared that 'under the pretense of myslykinge this mariedge' the rebellion was directed against herself and 'the Catholycke relligion and divine service restored within this our realme' (*Hist. MSS. Comm.* x. iv. 449, xiii. iv. 318). A well-informed contemporary adds that to the resistance to the Spanish marriage the rebels joined a desire 'for moving certayn counsellours from about the quene' (*Chronicle of Queens Jane and Mary*, p. 36). Lord Cobham, writing to the Queen, asserted that most of the rebels were 'rascalls and rakehells as lyve be spoyle' (Cruden, *Gravesend*, p. 181), but Sir Thomas Cheyney, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, testified to the temper of the commons, their earnestness 'in this theyr most develishe entreprise; and will by no means be persuaded to the contrary but that it is for the comen welthe of all the realme' (letter printed in Burgon's *Gresham*, i. 168, and in Cruden, p. 183). For the honest behaviour of Wyatt's men in Southwark see the *Chronicle* above cited, p. 45.

[1] There was word of the 'inconstancy and murmuring of the people in the north, touching the alteration of religion,' in 1565 (*Cal. S. P., Dom.*, Eliz. vol. vi. pp. 567, 570), and the examinations of the leaders show clearly that the purpose of the rebellion of 1569 was the restoration of Catholicism and the recognition of Mary, Queen of Scots, as the heir to the English throne. (See the statement of the Earl of Northumberland, *ibid.* p. 407, printed also in Sir Cuthbert Sharpe's *Memorials of the Rebellion of* 1569, p. 202, and Thos. Norton's examination, *Hist. MSS. Comm., Lord Salisbury's MSS.* i. 468.) When the two earls, followed by many of the leading gentlemen of the north, raised the standard of religious revolt, stating in their proclamation that they intended the redress of the overthrow of the true and Catholic religion (*Cal. S. P., Dom.*, Eliz. vol. vii. p. 111), the Earl of Sussex wrote that 'the people like so well their cause of religion that they flock to them in all places where they come' (*ibid.* p. 112). Sussex was not sure of his own handful of soldiers (*ibid.* pp. 108, 112), since in Yorkshire the 'inhabitants were more addicted to the rebels than to the Queen' (*ibid.* p. 124). Despite their high fines the 'meaner sort' sided willingly with the rebel leaders, and suffered for their religion. By Feb. 4 we hear of 500 of the poor sort already executed (*ibid.* p. 221). Inventories were taken of the goods and lands of this poor rebel class, amounting in value to 3,000*l.* (*ibid.* p. 251), but that they might not be 'brought to extreme beggary' and desperation they were allowed to go free and fined (*ibid.* p. 271. See the instructions, p. 252). Sir Ralph Sadler's letter of December 6, 1569, from the north, testifies to the stubborn conservatism of the 'comon people . . . ignorant, full of superstition, and altogether blynded with tholde popish doctryne,' as well as of their leaders, 'for there be not in all this countrey x gentlemen, that do favour and allowe of her Majesty's proceedings in the cause of religion' (*State Papers and Letters of Ralph Sadler*, 1809, ii. 325). James Pilkington, Bishop of Durham, writing to Cecil, January 4, 1569, does not support the doctrine that the rebels were men who had 'nothing to lose.' 'The number of offenders,' he says, 'is so grete, that few innocent are left to trie the giltie: and iff the forfeted landes be bestowed on such as be straungers, and will not dwell in the cuntre, the peple shall be withoute heades, the cuntre desert, and no number of

element, but of agrarian or social motives there is no satisfactory proof. Indeed, for the latter half of the century the anti-inclosure irritation found sufficient vent in occasional local and unimportant disturbances, though in Oxfordshire, under the stress of the scarcity of 1596, there were murmurs of rebellion against the inclosing gentry.[1]

But finally in 1607 the gradual advance of the inclosure movement in the midlands produced an outbreak on the part of the peasantry which had something more than the dimensions of the ordinary local riot. Through their county members, Sir Edward Montague acting as spokesman, the people of Northamptonshire had in 1604 declared as one of their grievances 'the depopulation and daily excessive conversion of tillage into pasture.'[2] Sir Edward, though himself impressed with the inconveniences of the open-field husbandry,[3] in reporting these complaints to Parliament, said that the 'cry of the county' had 'so strongly enjoined'

freeholders to doe justice bi juries, nor service in the warres' (*Works*, Parker Soc. p. ix).

[1] It was planned that some two or three hundred people should meet at Enslow Hill, spoil gentlemen's houses, and march to London, where they expected the support of the apprentices. A carpenter and a miller are indicated as the ringleaders, and the rebels are described as chiefly young unmarried men and not poor. One of the leaders asked for good fellows in Witney 'who would rise and knock down the gentlemen and rich men that take in the commons and make corn so dear.' Another declared that inclosures would be pulled down, 'whereby the ways were stopped and arable lands enclosed.' The chief inclosers were indicated: 'Mr. Power has enclosed much; Mr. Frere has destroyed the whole town of Water Eaton; Sir William Spencer has enclosed common fields, and many about Banbury and other places have done the same.' Henry, Lord Norris, one of the lords-lieutenant of Oxfordshire, asked for a 'commission and some order to be taken about enclosures on the western part of the shire, where this stir began, that the poor may be able to live' (*Cal. S. P., Dom.*, Eliz. vol. iv. pp. 316 ff., 343, 345; see also *Hist. MSS. Comm., Lord Salisbury's MSS.*, vii. 46). The Council wrote several letters to the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire concerning this intended revolt. The ringleaders were sent to London and examined 'under torture' by the Attorney-General and others. A paper drawn up in connection with these proceedings, erroneously calendared among the State Papers of James I., is here printed in Appendix I. Two gentlemen were accused of complicity in the rising. (Acts of the Privy Council, xxvi. 64, 365, 373, 383, 398, 412.)

[2] *Hist. MSS. Comm., MSS. of Lord Montagu of Beaulieu*, p. 42.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 107.

him that he could do no less than present this request to the 'consideration of your wisdoms.' It may be, as James asserted in one of his 1607 proclamations, that some fugitive notion of reform had been entertained,[1] but beyond re-enacting Elizabeth's last tillage statutes no effective steps had been taken to redress the grievance. Dearth had repeatedly stimulated both inclosure riots and legislation,[2] but it is not clear whether the rising corn prices, which reached their height in 1608, were sufficiently felt in the midland counties during the early part of 1607 to form one of the immediate causes of the revolt.[3] Northamptonshire had a certain Puritan element, which perhaps sympathised with the popular grievance—ecclesiastical abuses were at any rate

[1] Proclamation of May 30, 1607 (*Rot. Pat.* 5 *Jac. I.* p. 16): 'It is manifest by Act of Parliament, passed since our comming to this Crowne, that we have bene carefull to prevent such Enclosures and Depopulations, and that it hath bene an ordinary charge given by us to our Justices of Assizes, when they went to their Circuits, to enquire of all unlawful Depopulations and Enclosures, and to take order to remedy the same, and to punish the Offendors therein according to the due course of Law. And it is well knowen to many that we were now also in hand with some course to be taken by advise of our Counsell for the performance thereof.' In the following inclosure proclamation of June 28 the blame for non-execution of the law is transferred from the Justices of Assize to the people, who 'have bene wanting to themselves in the due and ordinary meanes which they ought to take, by presentment of such as are or have bene guilty of these oppressions.'

[2] Most of the anti-inclosure legislation of the sixteenth century coincides with periods of dearth. Complaints of dearth are audible at the time of the risings of 1536, 1548–9, and 1596. In 1620 the justices of Northamptonshire, in reporting against the project of corn magazines, add that the poor should be provided with cheap corn, 'to prevent their discontent and tumultuous levelling' (*Cal. S. P., Dom.*, James I. vol. x. p. 130).

[3] The inclosure proclamation of July 24, 1607, asserts that 'there was not so much as any necessitie of famine or dearth of corne . . . that might stirre or provoke them.' Rogers, however, indicates rising prices (*Ag. and Prices*, v. 186). High corn prices are reported from the west of England in 1606–7, and there are proclamations 'for thamendyng of the dearth of graine and other victuall' in 1607–8 (*Hist. MSS. Comm.* ix. i. 160, 268–9). A letter of Wm. Combe to the Earl of Salisbury, June 2, 1608, speaks of the dearth of corn in Warwickshire and adds that the common people threaten to resist turning arable land into pasture (*S. P., Dom.*, James I. vol. viii. p. 437). These troubles of 1607 are perhaps referred to by Arthur Standish when he mentions the mutinies caused 'only for the dearth of Corne in Warwikshire, Northamptonshire, and other places' (*The Commons Complaint*, 1611).

coupled with depopulation in the petition of 1604—but there is no trace of its activity in directly fomenting the disorders. There are dark hints that the levellers were instigated by the private animosities of their social betters,[1] and it is fairly certain that numerous townsmen and villagers willingly assisted the peasants in their enterprise and facilitated the rapid spread of the movement beyond the confines of Northamptonshire.[2] But unappeased irritation at the depopulating inclosures was alone the foundation of the revolt.[3]

[1] Lord Chief Justice Montague, writing to the Council in 1618 concerning a case of disputed common right in Bedfordshire, says the commoners 'are stirred up by others, as were the levellers in Northamptonshire' (*Cal. S. P., Dom.*, James I. vol. ix. p. 532). An undated paper, entered in the Calendar under the date 1635, but referring, I suspect, to the inclosure grievances of 1607, expresses the fear that 'nowe there ys a pacificacion had of theys trobles' and it is known who threw down the inclosures and who gave encouragement thereto, there will grow private revenges, 'and specially by the better sorte and by those that be in authoritie' (*S. P., Dom.*, Charles I. vol. 307, no. 2).

[2] Edmund Howes, in his additions to the 1615 edition of Stow's *Annals* (p. 889), says that wheresoever the rioters came 'they were generally relieved by the neer inhabitants, who sent them not only many cartes laden with victuall, but also good store of spades and shovells for speedy performance of their present enterprize.' The sympathy shown by the citizens of Leicester aroused the resentment of the Earl of Huntingdon, lord-lieutenant of the county, a resentment which cost the town and its chief dignitaries a considerable sum of money and much annoyance. By the earl's command a gibbet had been set up in Leicester to deter the people from assembling. This was torn down by the mob, which drew from the earl an angry letter, June 10, 1607 (*Hist. MSS. Comm.* viii. i. 434). The mayor and a Mr. Robert Erick were imprisoned, and the corporation, anxious to appease the earl's wrath, sent a present of a gelding to the younger countess of Huntingdon, which she refused (Nichols, *Leicestershire*, I. i. 420).

[3] This appears from the petition of 'The Diggers of Warwickshire to all other Diggers,' which very likely dates from these troubles. They complain of the 'incroaching Tirants,' who grind the poor, 'so y^t they may dwell by themselves in y^e midst of theyr heards of fatt weathers . . . onely for theyr owne private gaine. . . . They have depopulated and overthrowne whole townes and made thereof sheep pastures.' It is better to die manfully than 'to be pined to death for want of y^t w^ch those devouring encroachers do serve theyr fatt hogges and sheep withall.' Signed, 'poore Delvers and Daylabourers for y^e good of y^e Comonwealth till death' (printed in *Wit and Wisdom*, ed. Halliwell, New Shaksp. Soc., pp. 140–1). Another of the popular protests circulated at the time against inclosures is referred to in a letter of July 27, 1607, from Sir Wm. Pelham to the Earl of Rutland, inclosing a copy of a libel thrown into the parish church at Caistor (Northamptonshire), entitled 'The Poor Man's Friend and the

The rioters told the justices of the peace that their rising was not against the king, 'but only for reformation of those late inclosures, w^ch^ made them of y^e^ porest sorte reddy to pyne for want.'[1] Their desperation is the more comprehensible since 'it had beene credible reported unto them by many that of very late yeeres, there were 340 Townes decayed and depopulated' by inclosing.[2]

The first warning of trouble must have reached London towards the end of April 1607, for on the 30th the Earl of Shrewsbury was writing from Whitehall for the prevention of possible disturbances in Derbyshire.[3] The first actual rising, however, seems to have taken place in Northamptonshire on May eve, and thence to have spread into Warwickshire and Leicestershire. Neighbouring counties may have been somewhat affected. This was at any rate the case in Bedfordshire.[4] We hear of assemblies of 3,000 people at Hillmorton, in Warwickshire, of 5,000 at Cotesbach, in Leicestershire,[5] and Rushton, Pightesley,[6] and Haselbeech[7] in Northamptonshire, are named among the places

Gentleman's Plague,' and beginning, 'You gentlemen that rack your rents and throwe downe land for corne' (*Hist. MSS. Comm., Rutland MSS.* i. 406).

The officers of the Crown who advocated the inclosure of forests and wastes explained that the 'insurrection made against inclosures in Northamptonshire cannot be induced as a precedent,' since that was against depopulators who sought their own gain by 'expelling men out of their dwellings and converting tillage to pasture.' Their plan, on the contrary, was 'to people places now unpeopled' ('An Account of the Benefits from the Inclosing and Improving the Forests, &c., belonging to the Crown,' printed in St. John, *Observations on Land Revenue of the Crown*, App. iii., probably from Sir Julius Cæsar's papers).

[1] Letter of the Earl of Shrewsbury to the Earl of Kent, June 2, 1607 (*Lansdowne MSS.* vol. 90, f. 23), printed in Appendix II. no. 1.

[2] Howes, in Stow's *Annals*, ed. 1615, p. 889. He adds that many thought the cause of the rising was religion, either 'the Puritane faction to enforce their pretended reformation,' or the Papists to obtain toleration, but on examination it proved to be solely on account of inclosures and to prevent depopulation. The Earl of Kent mentions reports of 'popish priests' leaving the rebels. (See Appendix II. no. 2.)

[3] *Hist. MSS. Comm.* xii. iv., *Rutland MSS.* i. 405.

[4] Letter of June 20, printed in Appendix II., no. 3.

[5] Stow, *Annals*, ed. 1615, p. 889.

[6] For Rushton and Pightesley see Bridges, *Hist. of Northamptonshire*, ii. 206.

[7] P. R. O., Petty Bag Depopulation Returns, Inq. for Northamptonshire,

visited by the levellers. The local authorities contented themselves with persuasion, but it was soon apparent to the government that stronger weapons must be employed to quell the tumults. On May 30, therefore, a royal proclamation was issued, bidding the use of force of arms,[1] and sharp orders were sent down by the Council to various counties.[2] The gentlemen, finding 'great backwardness in the trained bands,' now bestirred themselves. One of their encounters with the rioters is reported from Newton, in Northamptonshire, where a body of mounted gentlemen with their servants dispersed a thousand levellers, killing some forty or fifty of the poorly armed rustics.[3] The peasants had found a leader, whom they

1607. At Haselbeech the whole lordship had been inclosed; out of 40 yardlands but two were left in tillage and four highways had been closed. One en of the town was stopped by Wm. Saunders till 'it was throwne down by those that made the late insurrection.'

[1] The repressing of the riots 'we did first referre onely to the due course of Justice, and the ordinary proceedings of the Commissioners of the Peace, and other our Ministers in such cases: Forasmuch as wee have perceived since, that lenitie hath bred in them, rather encouragement then obedience, and that they have presumed to gather themselves in greater multitudes, as well in that County (Northamptonshire) as in some others adjoyning, we finde it now very necessary to use sharper remedies.' All officers are therefore commanded, if such assemblies continue, 'immediately to suppresse them by whatsoever meanes they may, be it by force of Armes, if admonitions and other lawfull meanes doe not serve to reduce them to their dueties.'

[2] The Council to the Deputy Lieutenants of Leicestershire, May 29, 1607; order to suppress unlawful assemblies against inclosures (*Hist. MSS. Comm.* xii. iv., *Rutland MSS.* i. 405). The same to the Earl of Shrewsbury, Lord-Lieutenant of Derbyshire, June 8 (*ibid.*). The same to Lord Berkeley, Lord-Lieutenant of Gloucestershire, June 8. If there should be any inclosure riots there, he is to use forcible means to suppress them (*Hist. MSS. Comm.* iv. i., *MSS. of Lord Fitzhardinge*, p. 367).

[3] Letter of June 11, 1607, from the Earl of Shrewsbury to Sir John Manners: 'S[r] Anth. Mildmay and S[r] Edw. Montacute repaired to Newton, Mr. Thos. Tresham's toune, wheare 1000 of these fellowes who term themselves levelers weare busily digging, but weare furnished with many halfe pykes, pyked staves, long bills, and bowes and arrowes and stoanes. Thease gentlemen, fynding great backwardnes in the trained bandes, weare constrained to use all the horse they could make, and as many foote of their owne servants and fellowes as they could trust; and first read the proclamation twice unto them, using all the best perswasions to them to desist that they could devise; but when nothing would prevaile, they charged them thoroughlie both with their horse and foote. But the first charge they stoode, and fought desperatelie; but at the second charge they ran away, in which there weare slaine som 40 or 50 of them, and a very great number

called Captain Pouch,[1] one of those curious figures who frequently emerged in English popular uprisings, but his magic pouch and his claim of divine inspiration availed nothing against the energetic methods of suppression now taken, as the proclamation of June 28 asserts, both 'by martiall execution and civill justice.' In this characteristically wordy proclamation the king, declaring that 'the sayd Inclosures (lawfull or unlawfull) were all or the most part made before we had taken the scepter of this government into our possession,' washed his hands 'from the tolleration of these grievances' and promised reform. He announced that he had already assembled the judges to discover inclosure offenders and 'to consider how farre they may be touched in law, and in what course, and accordingly to proceed against them with all severitie.'[2] Another proclamation of July 24 granted a pardon to such as should acknowledge their offence.[3] By the middle of June the Council was sending for the chief inclosers[4] and shortly thereafter took into advisement the question of remedy or at least of appeasement. We have a memorandum on the subject[5] presented for their consideration, proposing measures which should steer a happy middle course,

hurt' (printed in Lodge, *Illustrations*, iii. 196, and Nichols, *Leicestershire*, iv. i. 83). A parish register entry by Thos. Cox, rector of Addington Magna, dates this skirmish at June 8. He says 'many were taken prisoners, who afterwards were hanged and quartered, and their quarters set up at Northampton, Oundle, Thrapston, and other places' (Bridges, *Northamptonshire*, ii. 206).

[1] This leader, John Reynoldes, was surnamed Captain Pouch, 'because of a great leather powch which he wore by his side, in which purse hee affirmed to his company, y^t^ there was sufficient matter to defend them against all commers, but afterward when hee was apprehended, his Powch was seearched and therein was onely a peece of greene cheese. Hee told them also, that hee had Authoritie from his maiestie to throwe downe enclosures, and that he was sent of God to satisfie all degrees whatsoever, and that in this present worke, hee was directed by the lord of Heaven' (Howes, in Stow's *Annals*, p. 889).

[2] Barker, *Book of Proclamations*, p. 140 (*Rot. Pat.* 5 *Jac. I.* p. 18).

[3] *Ibid.* p. 146 (*Rot. Pat.* 5 *Jac. I.* p. 11).

[4] See Appendix II. nos. 3, 4.

[5] 'A consideration of the cause in question before the Lords touchinge depopulation' (July 5, 1607), *Cotton MSS.*, Titus F. iv. 322–3, and a similar document, Faustina C. ii. 165. The 'Consideration' has been printed in Cunningham, *Engl. Industry and Commerce*, 3rd ed. II. ii. App. B, pp. 897–9.

on the one hand offering no hindrance to the gentlemen in their desire for a laudable agricultural improvement and yet on the other hand preventing depopulation, which the author of this 'Consideration' attributed rather to farm engrossing than to inclosure. One of the means propounded to secure this desirable end was a limitation in the number and size of farmholds held by any single individual, a revival of the policy of the Act of 1534,[1] combined with a limitation of demesne land. The alternative scheme was the permanent preservation of the then existing state of things to be ascertained by a minute agricultural survey of the country, or at least of the champion, *i.e.* open field counties. The Council fell, however, upon the familiar and easier expedient of a commission to investigate, and accordingly, in August 1607, the royal promise of redress was kept so far as to send out commissions of inquiry to the midland counties.[2] There was apparently some little effort to follow up the work of the commissioners by a prosecution of the offenders,[3] a prosecution largely stimulated, we suspect, by a desire to levy contributions in the way of commutations for the benefit of the Exchequer. But by a resolution of the judges in Trinity term, 5 James I., it was declared that the commission, despite the legal advice which James claimed he had sought, was not made out in valid form and that the laboriously

[1] 25 Hen. VIII. c. 13, no person to keep more than 2,000 sheep or hold in farm more than two houses of husbandry, and not two unless resident in the parish. A similar measure was under discussion in March 1549 (*Egerton Papers*, p. 11. Camden Soc.)

[2] *Rot. Pat.* 5 *Jac. I.* p. 26.

[3] Sir Edward Coke was active in these proceedings; see *Cal. S. P., Dom.*, James I. vol. viii. pp. 373, 541. Bonds were taken from the depopulators (*ibid.* pp. 483, 545), and some inclosures were ordered down. Edward, Lord Zouche, writing probably to Sir Edward Montague, deplores that 'poor Boughton's enclosures must also go down' (*Hist. MSS. Comm., MSS. of Lord Montague*, p. 85). I could find among the legal records but little trace of proceedings growing out of the activity of these commissioners of 1607. There are two folios containing fifteen orders of the depopulation commissioners for the rebuilding of houses of husbandry in Northamptonshire, together with assize presentments concerning the same. Eight of these orders are certified as having been performed, the new-built farmhouses having thirty to fifty acres each (P. R. O., *Misc. of the Exchcq.* 17/8).

collected returns were therefore 'against law.'[1] Before long we discover the country gentlemen proceeding with their inclosures in the centre of the disaffected district as unabashed as ever.[2]

II

The rising of 1607, weak and ineffective as it was, produced one tangible result for which the modern student must be grateful. The influence of the landed classes, the real governing element in the country, was sufficient during the whole period to render nugatory all efforts of the central government at reform of a grievance so generally deplored. But they could not prevent the gathering of information which throws a valuable light on the progress of a great economic change. Armed with their worthless mandate the commissioners of 1607 managed to collect a considerable mass of material, most of which has come down to us intact. They were sent to seven counties—to Northamptonshire, Warwickshire, Leicestershire, Huntingdonshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and the three divisions of Lincolnshire. The commission was dated August 27, and it directed that the returns be certified into Chancery at the latest by the following October 20. No time was lost in getting to work. By September 8 the commissioners were hearing the evidence

[1] 'The Commissioners took many presentments in English, and did return them into the Chancery; and after (*scil.* Trin. 5 Jac.) it was resolved by the two Chief Justices, and by Walmsley, Fenner, Yelverton, Williams, Snigg, Altham, and Forster, that the said commissions were against law for three causes: 1. Fo this, that they were in English. 2. For that the offences enquirable were noc certain within the commission itself, but in a schedule annexed to it. 3. For this, that it was only to enquire, which is against law, for by this a man may be unjustly accused by perjury, and he shall not have any remedy. 4. For this, that it is not within the statute of 5 Eliz., &c. Also the party may be defamed, and shall not have any traverse to it' (Coke, *Rep.* xii. 31).

[2] Letter of August 12, 1608: 'For an example of my own knowledge within less than a quarter of a mile of Holdenby House one great enclosure made since the late Stir, by one Mr. Saunders with Mr. Dyves and Mr. St. John in the Parish of East Haddon.' This and other inclosures, the letter says, was causing discontent among the meaner sort of people (*S. P., Dom.*, James I. vol. xxxv. p. 52, printed in Emily S. Hartshorne's *Memorials of Holdenby*, 1868, p. civ).

of the local juries in Buckinghamshire and Warwickshire. The returns from Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire are dated September 14; Huntingdonshire follows on the 18th, and Leicestershire on the 27th. We are told of the Leicestershire commissioners that they were proceeding 'so precisely that they take the oaths of the minister and two of the substantiallest men in every town for any particular which occurs to the commission; and in Northampton the commissioners have already sitten twelve days, and have not yet ended.'[1] This statement, though somewhat incorrect as to the procedure of the commissioners, nevertheless throws light on their activity. Six of these county returns which they duly certified into Chancery have been preserved, some of them, especially those for Bedfordshire and Warwickshire, imperfect from exposure to damp, but in the main not too seriously damaged for use. That for Northamptonshire is the fullest and best, perhaps because of the zeal of the same Sir Edward Montague who presented the petition of 1604 and was now one of the chief members of the commission for his county. The returns for Lincolnshire, though doubtless made, are now missing.[2]

To the commission was annexed a schedule of articles of inquiry. The first of these directs that inquiry be made of 'towns, villages, churches, hamletts, boroughs, parishes, dwelling-houses, farmes or farm-houses, families, ploughs or tenancies' decayed or depopulated since the twentieth year of Queen Elizabeth, by whom such decays have been committed and in whose hands such properties now are, and how

[1] Letter from Sir John Harpur to the Earl of Shrewsbury, September 25, 1607 (printed in Nichols, *Leicestershire*, III. ii. 563, n. 1). Notice of the sitting of the commission in Northampton, September 14, is found in a letter from Thos., Earl of Exeter, to Sir Edw. Montague (*Hist. MSS. Comm., MSS. of Lord Montague*, p. 50).

[2] That the commissioners for Lincolnshire sat at Spalding early in September we learn from a chance note at the end of a survey of the manor of Sutton, Lincolnshire: '9 Sept., 1607. Memorand that one of the tenants being at Spalding y^e^ day befor the Commissioners for inclosures meeting me on the way y^e^ next day did acknowledge that the medow and pasture at Sutton was worth xiii^s^ iiii^d^ the acre, the arrable viii^s^' (P. R. O., *Land Revenue Misc. Books*, vol. 211, f. 92).

many persons were thereby maintained before the depopulation. The second point of inquiry was as to the conversions of arable land to pasture 'by means of unlawful inclosure or otherwise, when and by whom, and in whose hands the same now be.' The third article deals with lands which have been 'devided, severed and taken awaye by any demyse or any other means from farme houses, tenauncies or other howses leaving to the same little or noe groundes at all whereby to releive and succour those that inhabitt the same.' A similar severance of land with the same constructive decay of a farmhouse occurs again in connection with the article on farm-engrossing (Article 5): 'to inquire of such as keepe in their handes diverse severall farmes or occupyings and doe occupie the groundes themselves and sett poore men or others into the dwelling houses or else lett them stande voyde.' The remaining three articles are concerned with the decay of barns and outhouses, displacing of tenants, and the closing of highways.

That the commissioners were sent only to the midlands need be no matter for surprise. Not only had this been the scene of the recent disturbance, but it was also the section of England afflicted more than others by the evils just recited in the articles of inquiry. The Inquisition of 1517 had revealed the prominence of the midlands in inclosing activity. It was here that the commissioners of 1548 began their abortive investigation, and there is no reason to suppose that in the interval before 1607 the centre of the disquieting agricultural change had shifted. Buckinghamshire and Leicestershire had demanded an inclosure inquiry in 1566, and almost a century later a writer is still recounting his 'woful experience' of inclosures in the county of Leicester. 'Most of the inland counties,' he adds, 'can witness with me.'[1] But it is certainly somewhat surprising that within this region some counties were passed over in the assignment of commissioners. Oxfordshire, for instance, had stood in 1517 only second to Northamptonshire in the acreage affected by the

[1] John Moore, *The Crying Sin of England*, 1653, p. 13.

inclosure movement, while the examinations of the would-be rebels in 1596 revealed the continuance of inclosure in this county. Besides the omitted midland counties there are others, included in the returns of 1517, where it is equally certain that inclosing activity, though probably less marked than in the inland districts, was still persisting. Norfolk, we know, returned in the Inquisition of Depopulation of 1517 a large acreage, and under Elizabeth it had sent up a bitter petition which, though mainly directed against the encroachments of the lords of the soil upon the commons, shows that the grievance against the depopulator and the incloser still had reason for existence.[1] Lincolnshire, as has been seen, was included in the inquiry of 1607, and, along with other counties outside the midlands as well as within, furnished its quota of offenders to be mulcted by the commission of 1636. Inclosure disturbances had been feared from Gloucestershire and Derbyshire at the time of the outbreak of 1607, and scattered bits of evidence could be adduced from Star Chamber proceedings and similar sources to show the continuance of inclosure agitation here and in neighbouring counties, such as Staffordshire, Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire, and others. It seems probable, indeed, that the sixteenth century witnessed a gradual extension of the inclosure movement towards the north. The evils of inclosures and high gressoms, resented by the northern rebels of 1536, were the subject of a paragraph in the instructions to the Lord President and Council of the North under Edward VI.,[2]

[1] In this petition complaint is made that gentlemen have 'enlarged ther parks and made gret Inclosures not only upon ther corne londs but upon the common wherein yo^r seyd pore subjects were wonte to shak and fede there w^e ther catell,' and also that lords of manors have purchased freeholds and gotten possession of copyholds and then in sundry towns have 'decayed the houses of the seyd mesuages and tenements.'

[2] 'Further, his highness pleasure is, that the said lord president and council shall from time to time make diligent inquisition of the wrongful taking in and inclosing of commons and other grounds, and who be extreme therein; and in taking and exacting of unreasonable fines and gressoms, and overing or raising of rents; and to call the parties that have so evil used themselves therein before them; and leaving all respects and affections apart, they shall take such order for the redress of enormities used in the same, as the poor people be not

were frequently noted in the second half of the century in connection with the decline of the Border military service, and at the time of the inclosure legislation of 1597 evoked the sympathetic remonstrance of the Durham churchmen.[1] But the progress of the movement outside a few midland counties was ignored by the government, which probably felt that it would be incurring odium enough by the limited investigation which the revolt had forced upon it. We must operate, therefore, as best we can with our restricted material.

Before attempting a brief summary of the statistical results which this material yields we must face some of the doubts and difficulties which meet us at the threshold and cannot be lightly conjured away. From the nature of the evidence we are aware in advance that our columns of figures must present but a delusive appearance of completeness and exactness. There are the omissions due to the damaged condition of the documents. These, however, are not considerable. But what are we to say about omissions due to other corruptions than those of time and damp? What assurance have we that all or nearly all of the inclosures during nearly thirty years in these six counties were actually presented by the local witnesses to the commissioners? The

oppressed; but that they may live after their sorts and qualities' (printed in Burnet, *Hist. of the Reformation*, ed. Pocock, v. 339). See also the instructions of 1557, 1568, and 1574 to the Council of the North for the suppression of 'the unlawful taking in of commons,' and the decay of houses and tillage (*S. P., Dom.*, Eliz. vol. vi. pp. 465, vii.' pp. 64, 462). An inquiry into the state of Borders in 1578–80 (*Cal. of Border Papers*, i. 47, 50, 74) led to the Act of 1581 (23 Eliz. c. 4) which testifies to the conversion of tillage to pasture. A new bill drafted about 1596 recurs to the same fact. But in the returns of the commissioners appointed under the Act other causes for the decrease of tenants properly equipped for Border service appear of more importance. Of the extension of pasture farming in the North there can, however, be no question.

[1] The Dean of Durham exaggerates after the fashion of the time in stating that 500 ploughs were decayed and 'of 8,000 acres lately in tillage now not eightscore are tilled' (*Cal. S. P., Dom.*, Eliz. vol. iv. pp. 347, 542), but for an instance of thorough depopulation note the case of Newham, whence there were 'expelled seaventene score men, women, and children all upon one day' (Bateson, *Northumberland*, I. 275). The Bishop of Durham was at the same time urging on Lord Burghley the revival of the tillage statutes (*Hist. MSS. Comm., Lord Salisbury's MSS.* vii. 453).

answer to this question, unhappily for the equanimity of the historical statistician, cannot be definite and convincing. The estimate of leakage here must remain a matter of opinion, and perhaps of widely divergent opinion. Contemporary comment at once recurs to us—and evidence from various sources could easily be accumulated to the same effect—which goes to show the frequent venality and untrustworthiness of the local juries of the period, the intimidation of jurors and witnesses by powerful local magnates, and the partiality of judges and even of royal commissioners. Specific instances of such influence in connection with the work of royal commissioners, as distinguished from merely general statements of the abuses of justice and the jury system under the shadow of the governing landed class, are, from the nature of the case, not abundant, but even a few cases will illustrate the point. At the time of the commission of 1517 not even Wolsey's zeal and the fear of his masterful rule were sufficient to check these practices. Nicholas Eustace, constable of Ascot, in Oxfordshire, together with three husbandmen, complained to the Court of Requests that because of their presenting before the inclosure commissioners the inclosures and decays in that town, Robert Dormer, their landlord, and John Wilmot, his farmer, have warned them 'after right haut and cruell maner . . . to avoyde theyr fermes and tennanteryes to their undoings.'[1] About the same period Wolsey was sending commissioners to Bungay, in Suffolk, to examine into a case of eviction charged in the Star Chamber against the bailiff of the town. The commissioners wrote to the Cardinal that the bailiff, backed by the steward of the Duke of Norfolk, refused utterly to make any answer, since 'it was my lord his maister is pleasure that we shuld not medyll,' wherefore, add the Crown officials, 'we myght no farther procede to thexamynacon of those maters.'[2] A few years later George Marbury of Upton, Huntingdonshire, complains vehemently against the wealthy and influential Richard Sapcotes that he can obtain

[1] P. R. O., *Court of Requests, Proceedings*, 8/256.
[2] P. R. O., *Star Chamber Proceedings*, Henry VIII. 34/29.

no justice, since Sapcotes 'reteyneth so many lerned men of his counsaill and maketh such friends,' while when the king's steward, supported by the sheriff, brought the case before a local jury, the jurymen, being all Sapcotes's tenants, 'sayde wherefore shuld they fynde or presente the same'? Wolsey sent down commissioners, but they neglected to make any return, and Sapcotes 'still oppresses,' and threatens to 'make yo^r said subject a begger.'[1] Thomas Vachell reports about 1534 to Cromwell that he went to Oxford to obtain a presentment for the king 'of suche landes and tenements as arne decayed inclosed wythin the seyd countie and convertid and turned to pasture,' and that it was only by the efforts of one of the jury who 'canvassed' his fellows with Cromwell's letter that 'they have sumwhat made a presentment or ells I reken they wolde have presented nothyng for the kyng ther wasse so grete laber made to the contrary.'[2] The difficulties of this kind encountered by the Inclosure Commission of 1548 are well known from John Hales's account. 'Somme,' he says, 'founde the means to have ther seruantes sworne in the Juryes, to thyntent to haue them hasarde ther soules to saue ther gredynes . . . it is not possible in any of the Shires wher we were to make a Jurye without them, suche is the multitude of Reteynours and hangers on. . . . Somme poore men wer thretened to be put from ther holdes if they presented . . . . Somme also wer indicted because they presented the truthe.'[3] The continuance of the contemporary castigation of the perjury of witnesses and the embracery of juries[4]

[1] P. R. O., *Star Chamber Proceedings*, Henry VIII. bdle. 28, no. 65.

[2] P. R. O., *S. P.*, Hen. VIII. vol. 87, f. 46. Latimer writes to Cromwell about the same time, 'yf commyssioners were allweys as mindfull to further the kyngs busynes as they be to avaunce ther owne profetts . . . butt I wene yf you myght make progresse thorow ought England you shulde fynd how actts declarith hartts' (*ibid.* vol. 83, f. 193).

[3] Introd. to *Discourse*, ed. Lamond, p. lix.

[4] See, for example, Lambard, *Archeion*, 1591, ed. 1635, pp. 83–4, 190, 198, 202–3. A proclamation was issued in 1607 against the abuses of juries (Barker, *Book of Proclamations*, p. 157). Powell, in 1636, complains of 'the litigious Countryman,' who provides for a trial at the assizes by preparing, 'as the too common proverb is, *horresco referens*, good swearers, that may cleave a prune, and so by horrid perjury outstrip God' (*Depopulation Arraigned*, p. 63).

gives little room for hope that the conditions described by Hales had materially altered by 1607.

Some allowance must, therefore, be made for the suppression of truth by juries fearful of their landlords or even by commissioners anxious to screen their friends. But though such a reservation must be granted distrust and scepticism need not be carried to an extreme. The fact remains that in the teeth of all obstacles the royal commissioners succeeded in returning presentments against a goodly number of the larger and powerful landowners. It was the very effectiveness of these inquisitions, not perhaps so much in their actual as in their dreaded results and in their exposures, which excited the bitter opposition of the country gentlemen. An impolitic zeal in promoting such awkward inquiries contributed in no small measure to the fall of two such masterful statesmen as Wolsey and Somerset. It is significant, furthermore, that the juries did not always conceal, though they occasionally may have palliated, the offences of the inclosure commissioners themselves, or of their fellow jurymen.[1] On the whole I incline to the possibly too optimistic view that what was withheld formed but a fraction, probably not insignificant, but not so very large, of what was actually declared and recorded. In any case a statistical estimate of the *suppressio veri* in the inquisitions would be pure guess-work and wholly inadmissible. With all their inadequacies on

[1] In the 1607 Inquisition for Bedfordshire two of the commissioners, Henry, Earl of Kent, and Sir Richard Conquest, were presented for depopulation. The son of the commissioner, Sir Edward Montague, was presented in Northamptonshire for a considerable inclosure at Hanging Houghton. Sir Oliver Cromwell, one of the commissioners for Huntingdonshire, was presented for an inclosure at Sawtrey. There are a number of presentments of jurymen; for instance, in Northamptonshire at Arthingworth of five yardlands inclosed two were in the occupation of William Malyn, a juror, 'havinge noe more in his occupation;' at the inclosure of Haselbeech three jurymen were implicated; at Kislingbury Wm. Crane the elder was presented by Wm. Crane junior as responsible for the decay of a house, but two cottiers, it was added, were placed in the house 'before he came to it.' The Lincolnshire returns of 1517 show two of the commissioners presented for inclosures, but in both cases the addition is made that there is 'no howse or beilding desolate nor in dekey by reason of the said enclosure' (*Domesday of Inclosures*, pp. 248, 251).

this score also the returns must be tabulated as they stand.

We are not, unfortunately, at an end of doubts and perplexities, but rather, when the statistical tabulation is once undertaken, at the beginning of them. An elucidation of the minor difficulties of interpretation, however, would be out of place severed from the text of the returns and may here be passed over. But uninviting as the subject is, there is one question of a rather technical nature, which is vital not merely to the tabulation of our results but to the understanding of the character of the whole movement we are studying. Some discussion of it cannot well be avoided. It is clear that in the agrarian changes of the time various factors were co-operating, or at least acting concurrently. Some elements in the problem, such as rent-raising and questions of tenure, may for the present be left out of consideration. So far as inclosure itself is concerned, a distinction must be made between the inclosure of the common fields and that of the commonable pastures and wastes; a few words will suffice to indicate the relatively unimportant place of the latter in the Inquisition. Furthermore, the engrossing of farms was a feature of the movement upon which stress must be laid; the writer of the 'Consideration' of 1607 insists, indeed, that the evil is not inclosure *per se* but farm-engrossing. It is this distinction and its application to the large number of entries of 'severed land' which creates some difficulty.

First, as to the commons. The inclosure of common pastureland was not so exasperating, so vital a matter, at least in the midlands, as the inclosure of the open or common fields. Nevertheless the legal records exhibit the struggle over the commons proceeding continuously over all parts of England. This struggle, with varying intensity, had been going on for centuries, but little special legislation was deemed necessary for their protection. The statute of Merton was renewed under Edward VI., and this was considered enough. Though this inclosure of commons was doubtless adding its quota to the agrarian

suffering and unrest of the time, no inquiry was instituted on their behalf during a period when so many essays in legislation and legal prosecution were undertaken to shield the open fields. Inclosure of pasture and waste is not mentioned in the articles of inquiry of 1607, but the juries occasionally presented it, and a certain number of cases are therefore found in the returns. These and other cases of mere inclosure, as, for instance, of parks, we may tabulate readily under the heading 'acreage inclosed.'

Depopulating inclosure of open fields was itself, however, a complex process. The articles of inquiry note separately the various operations ordinarily combined in this process—the decay of the farmhouse, the inclosure and conversion to pasture of its land, the severance of this land from the house when the house is left standing, the engrossing of farmholds, the displacement of tenants. A study of the returns of 1607 shows that some of these operations, usually united, were in fact occasionally executed separately. When land in the open field, for example, was withdrawn from the customary husbandry and laid down to grass for sheep pasture, it was as a rule, and it would seem necessarily, inclosed. But the Inquisition shows several cases of conversion of arable to pasture without inclosure as at Rushton,[1] or as at Stapleford[2] where the land so converted was apparently still lying in open field. At Tilsworth, Bedfordshire, we find a son inclosing what his father had previously converted. Such cases, of course, like the normal entry where all the stages are explicitly stated, may be classified without difficulty under the head of 'acreage converted.' But what shall be done with the large number of cases where neither inclosure nor conversion to pasture is stated, which present only the decay of the farmhouse or only the severance of its appurtenant acreage with the constructive decay of the house, as described in the third article of inquiry? This difficulty

[1] At Ruston, Northamptonshire, 'the said Sir Thomas Tressam hath converted from tillage to pasture and not inclosed 28 acres about six years last past.'

[2] Sir Philip Sherrard is presented for converting 80 acres, a part whereof lies inclosed 'and the residue lyeinge in common in the oppen feilde.'

arose likewise in interpreting and classifying the returns of 1517, and has already been the subject of a discussion before the Society.

In his edition of the 'Inquisition of 1517' Mr. Leadam undertook to solve the difficulty by assuming with the decay an accompanying but unexpressed inclosure, and on this assumption treated these entries as cases of inclosure of open field for an improved arable husbandry. This, however, does not appear an adequate solution of the problem, since it runs counter to the contemporary conception of the nature of the inclosure movement, as expressed not only in the literature of the time but unequivocally in the husbandry statutes and in the articles of inquiry under which the commissioners of 1517 were working. It has the further defect of creating a series of fresh difficulties of interpretation. In criticising this view I suggested that two other solutions would appear to accord more nearly with the facts.[1] We might, in the first place, accept the statement of the troublesome entries without adding any assumption whatever, inferring only a probable engrossing of open-field holdings. Or, in the second place, we may assume not only inclosure but also conversion to pasture as implicit in the presentment. The decay of a mese with 20 acres of land was the only statutable offence; mention of inclosure and conversion was, therefore, not essential to a valid presentment, and the statement of these usually accompanying operations might have been omitted even though present in fact. The statutes and articles of inquiry apparently knew of no other kind of decay than that associated with sheep-farming inclosure. Consequently when it was found that in the subsequent legal proceedings, based upon the returns of 1517, both the law officers of the Crown and the defendants were treating such entries of bare decay as implying inclosure and conversion, the second interpretation seemed not only permissible but necessary. But the new light thrown on this disputable point by the inquisition of 1607 may necessitate

[1] *Trans. R. H. S.* xiv. 290.

a separate tabulation of these entries. It seems likely that we must to some extent fall back, not on the unsatisfactory hypothesis of inclosure for an improved arable husbandry, though doubtless there were some instances of such inclosure, but on our first and simplest proposal, accepting a certain indeterminable proportion of the entries as cases of mere decay, the system of land management remaining unchanged, as it was before the severance.

There are a few entries in the 1607 returns pointing towards this conclusion which at any rate suggest that decays of farmhouses could and did take place without disturbing the traditional husbandry—that is, without any accompanying inclosure and conversion. Take the case of Ashley, in Northamptonshire. Here there are two presentments. William Stricte severs six yardlands from a manorhouse, puts a widow in the house, a labourer in the kitchen, and a weaver in the barn, while he lets the land to two tenants. Such entries as this, giving no further information as to the agricultural disposition of the severed land, are frequent. The other presentment at Ashley is, however, somewhat more explicit. George Kilton takes from a farmhouse two and a half yardlands (30 acres), and puts a labourer in the house, who has but 'one acre of land in every field.' Here the open fields are evidently still in existence, but it is nevertheless possible the thirty acres were inclosed and converted. At Milton (Northamptonshire) is another suspicious case. The presentment is of a farmhouse decayed. It has some old inclosed land and one and a half yardlands in the open fields. Both parcels are taken away and leased separately to two sets of tenants, three lessees taking a half-yardland apiece. This looks rather like a severance with a continuation of open-field husbandry.

As has been already stated, contemporaries of the earlier inquisition of 1517 seem clearly to have seen in an entry of a decayed house of husbandry the whole process of which such decay was normally the result. But perhaps their inference was somewhat too sweeping. In some of these cases there was probably no inclosure, no conversion, but simply an

engrossing of holdings with no radical change in the old system of agriculture. Certain comparisons between the figures of the two inquisitions seem to confirm this conjecture. If the acreage of the class of entries in question be tabulated simply as 'acreage severed,' we find that with one exception the county returns from the inquisitions of 1517 and 1607 agree in the relative proportions of 'acreage severed' and 'acreage converted.' In Warwickshire, Leicestershire, and Buckinghamshire the acreage converted exceeds the acreage severed at both periods; in Bedfordshire, however, both inquisitions coincide in giving a large preponderance to acreage severed. Buckinghamshire affords also an interesting comparison within its own borders. The northern half of the county contrasts in the returns with the southern hundreds, the 'Vale' with the 'Chilterns.' In both returns acreage converted is the rule in the north, while in the south there is in both an even greater preponderance of acreage severed.[1] These coincidences can hardly be fortuitous; they go far to support the impression that underneath the difference in the form of the presentment there lies at times some real difference in fact, corresponding to certain peculiarities in the character of the agricultural change in certain counties. It is noticeable also in this connection that while in the earlier inclosure legislation decay of farmhouses and conversion to pasture are closely linked, in Elizabeth's last husbandry statutes these offences are dealt with in two separate Acts. In these circumstances it will be advisable to add permanently to the captions 'acreage inclosed' and 'acreage converted,' the third, 'acreage severed.' It is a regrettably wide and inclusive term;

[1]

Buckinghamshire	Northern hundreds		Southern hundreds	
	A. conv.	A. sev.	A. conv.	A. sev.
Acreage . . . 1517	5,567	1,368	512	1,549
,, . . . 1607	2,742	1,294	790	1,671
Percentages . . 1517	75·58	18·67	20·89	77·95
,, . . 1607	62·74	33·37	29·19	70·07

it embraces the severance and farm-engrossing both in the old inclosed districts and in the open-field country without distinction; it contains, doubtless, much which with better information would have been entered in the column of acreage converted, but it has the conclusive advantage that it forces no interpretation upon the record. The tabulation which, after these necessary introductory warnings and explanations, is herewith presented will attempt with a minimum of inference to render in figures what is so translatable in the returns. It deals with acreages inclosed, converted (and inclosed), and severed, with houses decayed actually or constructively, with places affected by the movement and with the number of persons reported as displaced. The status of the offenders inclosing or depopulating is not satisfactorily determinable from the returns and will be here passed over.

In this table the results from the inquisitions of 1517 and 1607 are placed side by side for comparison. Both covered practically the same retrospective period, the earlier one the thirty-two years from 1485 to 1517 and the later the thirty years from 1578. But while they are nearly equal in their time span they are not well matched in respect to the area covered. The inquisition of 1517 is represented in the table by twenty-two counties, that of 1607 by but six. The former, however, lacks in its midland group the Huntingdonshire returns, which are present in 1607, while in the latter, as has already been pointed out, several midland counties are missing which were reported on in 1517.

Of the five midland counties which alone, therefore, are comparable, Northamptonshire yields the largest total acreage in both inquisitions. Its figure is in 1607 almost double that of 1517. This may be due in part to an increase in the volume of inclosing activity, but it may also be partly attributable to the vigilance of the later commissioners in collecting evidence as to severance. Leicestershire and Bedfordshire have more than doubled their earlier totals, but in the case of the latter county the loss of the 1517 return has probably not been wholly made good by the record of

TABLE I.—*Inquisition of* 1517–19 (1485–1517) *Inquisition of* 1607 (1578–1607)

Counties	Total acreage affected	Percentage of total co. area	Acreage inclosed	Acreage converted	Acreage severed	Houses of husbandry decayed	Persons displaced	Number of places	Total acreage affected	Percentage of total co. area	Acreage inclosed	Acreage converted	Acreage severed	Houses of husbandry decayed	Persons displaced	Number of places
I. *Northern.*																
Chester	65	0·01	15	50	—	—	—	[illegible]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
York, W.R.	1,837	0·10	1,217	400	220	18	58	28	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
York, N.R.	2,503	0·18	752	1,751	—	30	82	28	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
York, E.R.	1,384	0·18	230	792	362	31	135	25	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
II. *Western.*																
Salop	1,859	0·22	231	1,628	—	23	356	71	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hereford	1,185	0·22	145	600	440	22	—	18	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gloucester	3,681	0·46	1,786	1,895	—	49	211	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
III. *Midland.*																
Stafford	538	0·07	313	145	80	4	15	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Derby	620	0·10	40	550	30	18	56	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Notts	4,470	0·83	1,056	2,024	1,390	71	188	80	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Warwick	9,694	1·68	1,124	6,022	2,547	207	1,018	70	5,373	0·93	—	4,973	400	88	33	28
Leicester	5,780	1·09	136	4,622	1,022	148	542	49	12,290	2·32	—	9,005	3,285	172	120	70
Rutland	531	0·55	43	145	343	26	—	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Northampton	14,081	2·21	960	9,514	3,607	354	1,405	112	27,335	4·30	3,532	10,746	13,056	358	1,444	118
Oxford	11,831	2·47	1,069	5,068	5,694	186	720	107	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Buckingham	9,921	2·08	451	6,079	3,390	172	887	70	7,077	1·48	190	3,532	3,355	80	86	56
Bedford	4,137	1·37	—	984	3,153	89	309	36	10,004	3·32	464	2,852	6,687	122	259	69
Berks	6,392	1·39	264	1,712	4,416	116	588	86	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Middlesex	2,236	1·52	1,196	822	218	12	123	18	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Huntingdon	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7,677	3·29	9	3,798	3,870	146	290	52
Cambridge	1,402	0·25	882	440	80	1	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
IV. *Eastern.*																
Lincoln	4,866	0·29	155	2,168	2,543	70	158	63	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Norfolk	9,334	0·71	613	7,672	1,049	70	—	122	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Essex	1,248	0·31	100	920	228	12	38	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
V. *Southern.*[1]																
Hants	1,035	0·10	269	766	—	8	42	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Somerset	660	0·06	374	112	174	8	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Summary.[2]																
I.	5,789	0·12	2,214	2,993	582	79	275	86	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
II.	6,725	0·31	2,162	4,123	440	94	567	109	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
III.	71,634	1·16	7,534	38,128	25,971	1,404	5,851	671	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
IV.	15,448	0·39	868	10,760	3,820	152	196	194	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
V.	1,695	0·08	643	878	174	16	42	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	101,293	0·53	13,422	56,883	30,987	1,745	6,931	1,090	69,758	2·53	4,196	34,907	30,654	96	2,232	393

[1] Wiltshire, with one entry of a house decayed and one ploughland converted to pasture, is here omitted.
[2] Fractions, here omitted in the county entries, are included in the totals.

legal proceedings based upon it. Buckinghamshire and Warwickshire have fallen behind. The totals for the five counties are greater in 1607 than in 1517, but the difference is mainly due to the marked growth in the severance column, which at the earlier date contributed but 31 per cent. of the total acreage, while by 1607 it had reached 43 per cent.[1]

The acreage affected in 1517 in the twenty-two counties amounted for the thirty-two years to but 0·53 per cent. of the total land area of these counties. For all the midland counties represented in this Inquisition the acreage was 1·15 per cent., while for the five counties returned in both 1517 and 1607 the percentage of acreage returned to the total acreage of the counties was respectively 1·72 per cent. and 2·46 per cent. The comparative insignificance of these amounts leaves margin for a liberal allowance for all possible factors of error and deficiency in the returns, and yet forces us to the general conclusion that the movement was proceeding only gradually and slowly. It was by no means so widespread and devastating as it has often been represented.

While the total acreage inclosed or severed is not large, the number of towns and villages concerned in the movement indicates that at any rate in the midlands the tendency to inclosure on a small scale was general. The total acreage reported in 1607, viz. 69,758 acres, is scattered among 393 places, making an average of 177·5 acres to a place. Excluding Huntingdonshire we have an average of 182 acres, as compared with 129·4 acres, the average per place in 1517 for the five midland counties. A classification of places according to the area affected per place brings out the fact that the smaller inclosures, or severances, those under a hundred acres, form a very large percentage of the total,

[1]

—	Acreage converted	Acreage severed	Total acreage	Percentages	
				Converted	Severed
1517 . .	27,222	13,720	43,614	62·41	31·45
1607 . .	31,109	26,784	62,080	50·11	43·14

somewhat larger (58·45 per cent.) in the five midland counties for 1517 than for the same counties at the later period (47·5 per cent.).[1] The number of total and complete clearances reported is very small. Piecemeal inclosures and small farm engrossing was the rule, and these were being effected to a large extent by small landholders and occupiers.

An attempt to determine statistically the progress of the movement in time has to meet some difficulties of its own. It might be expected that in such an inquisition offences of recent standing—perhaps of the last ten or fifteen years—would be better remembered, and consequently more in evidence, than those of an earlier date. On the other hand many of the entries are very loosely dated. Some eleven per cent. are not dated at all, and a considerable number state merely that the fact presented occurred 'since the twentieth year of Elizabeth,' *i.e.* since the *terminus a quo* set by the commission. These latter entries go to swell the number of earlier offences. Warwickshire returns are especially weak in this matter of dating. But even though weighted with such doubtfully dated entries the acreages reported for the first half of the period fall far short of those of the last half, a contrast too striking to be explained away by a lapse of memory. For the years preceding 1593 only 27 per cent. of the total acreage is returned. The marked rise commencing in the

[1] *For the Five Midland Counties reported on in both Inquisitions.*

—	Total No. of places	Acreage affected			
		1–99	100–499	500–999	Over 1,000
1517	337	198	130	9	1
1607	341	162	157	15	7

For all the Counties.

—	Total No. of places	Acreage affected						
		1–99	100–199	200–299	300–399	400–499	500–599	Over 1,000
1517 (23 counties) .	1,090	747	198	79	33	17	15	1
1607 (6 counties) .	393	188	87	62	21	11	17	7

period 1593–7 indicates that the statement of the preamble to the husbandry statute of 1597, declaring that 'of late years more than in times past' depopulation had increased, had more basis in fact than was always the case in preamble assertions. The sudden rise after 1593 is maintained to the end, falling slightly from 1598 to 1602, but reaching the highest point in the last quinquennial period, contrary to the opinion of the royal proclamation of 1607. This high figure for the last five years is due to the increase in three counties —Buckinghamshire, Huntingdonshire, and Northamptonshire. Bedfordshire reached its highest in 1593–7, as did also Warwickshire, if its misleading figure for 1578–82 be left out of account. Leicestershire was at its highest in 1598–1602.

TABLE II.—*Progress of Inclosures and Severances*, 1578–1607

—	1578 to 1582	1583 to 1587	1588 to 1592	1593 to 1597	1598 to 1602	1603 to 1607	Undated	Total
Bedfordshire .	368	1,330	395	3,259	1,604	1,547	1,500	10,004
Buckinghamshire	721	768	527	1,116	840	1,351	1,754	7,077
Huntingdonshire	19	594	494	1,122	980	2,921	1,547	7,677
Leicestershire .	1,680	827	855	2,873	3,329	1,948	778	12,290
Northampton-shire . .	4,214	1,138	2,493	4,646	6,045	7,029	1,769	27,335
Warwickshire .	1,790	1,260	624	1,026	830	315	528	5,373
Totals . .	8,792	4,917	5,388	14,043	13,628	15,111	7,876	69,758

Totals by decades	1578–1588 13,710	1588–1597 19,431	1598–1607 28,740
Totals for 15-year periods	1578–1592 19,098	1593–160 52,783	

Percentages

—	1578 to 1582	1583 to 1587	1588 to 1592	1593 to 1597	1598 to 1602	1603 to 1607	Undated
Bedfordshire .	3·68	13·30	3·95	32·58	16·03	15·46	15·00
Buckinghamshire	10·19	10·85	7·45	15·77	11·87	19·09	24·78
Huntingdonshire	0·25	7·44	6·43	14·61	12·77	38·05	20·15
Leicestershire .	13·67	6·73	6·95	23·38	27·09	15·85	6·33
Northampton-shire . .	15·42	4·16	9·12	17·00	22·12	25·71	6·47
Warwickshire .	33·31	4·84	11·61	19·10	15·45	5·86	9·83
Totals . .	12·60	7·05	7·73	20·13	19·54	21·66	11·29

Totals by decades	1578–1587 19·65	1588–1597 27·86	1598–1607 41·20
Totals for periods	1578–1592 27·38	1593–1607 61·33	

There is no marked difference in the relative progress of the two classes of acreage converted and acreage severed. The increase runs parallel though the rise in acreage severed is somewhat more marked in the last decade.

The statistical results, thus hastily sketched, throw some light on the question raised at the beginning of this paper, the share of the specific inclosure movement of this period in causing the greater popular uprisings. The inclosure of open field, I suggested, plays but a comparatively small part in these rebellions, that of commons somewhat more. A comparatively small cause may doubtless produce much irritation. The tendency to inclosure gradually gathering force caused much social distress, particularly in the central-lying counties, and a still larger amount of complaint, since it was made to bear the responsibility for ills not its own progeny. But our figures, with all their deficiencies, warn against exaggeration of the actual extent of the movement, against an uncritical acceptance of the contemporary estimate both of the greatness and the evil of the first century and a half of the 'Agrarian Revolution.' If the agrarian changes had been so thorough, rapid, and far-reaching under the Tudors as we are usually told, if the masses who supported the revolts had been, in truth, uprooted from the soil, there would have been, very possibly, a different history to relate of the English rebellions.

APPENDIX I.[1]

S. P. Dom.[2] James I., Vol. 28, No. 64.[3]

BARTHOLMEWE STERE carpenter and singleman, and placed in verie good service about a fortnight before Michellmas was the first deviser of this insurreccon, his owtward pretence was to overthrowe enclosures, & to helpe the poore cominaltie that were readie to famish for want of corne, But intended to kill the gentleman of that countrie, and to take the spoile of them affirming that the Commons, long sithens in Spaine did rise and kill all the gentlemen in Spaine, and sithens that time have lyved merrily there, That after this he meant to have gonne to London and ioyned w^th^ the prentices, who as he thought would ioyne w^th^ him, for that some of them were lately hanged for the like attempt. And said y^t^ was but a monethes work to overrunne England. He continewally persuaded others to ioyne w^th^ him in this treason, and specially Roger Symondes who was a poore man, and had a greate charge of children, and therefore should have some Collour to rise in respect of hunger.

He and Richard Bradshawe (who willingly ioyned w^th^ him), agreed that the place where they should first assemble should be at Enslowe Hill, on the Monddie next after S^t^ Hughes daie. For Bradshawe said the sooner the Better And Barth: Stere said, that there was ons a rising at Enslowe Hill by the Commons and they were perswaded to goe downe, and after were hanged like dogges. But said he wee will never yeeld but goe through w^th^ yt.

He at the first entering to this treason served the L. Norreis meant to have spoiled his howse, and to have taken his horse armo^r^ and artillarie, and to have victualled themselves w^th^ his wine, Beere, & other necessaries, and perswaded his Lps. carter, and coachman to ioyne w^th^ him meaning to use them for their carriages.

[1] This document should be dated 1597. See above, p. 284, n. 1.

[2] The conjecture in the Calendar as to the description and dating of this report is erroneous. It belongs to the proceedings of 1597 against the Oxfordshire conspiracy. See above, p. 284, n. 1.

[3] The transcription of the following illustrative documents, with one exception, I owe to the liberality of this Society. Mr. W. H. Price kindly copied for me from the *Lansdowne MSS.* the letter numbered 1 in Appendix II.

He expected that the Gentlemens servantes of his Countrie would joyne with him in cutting their masters throates, for that he said they were kepte like dogges.

He hadd allso drawne two of S^r^ Willm^s^ Spencers servantes videlt his Cater, and Carter, to be as he termed them sownde fellowes. At the time and place appointed Barth Stere, Edward Bompas Robert Burton mason, and Thomas Horne, mett about ix of the Clock in the night well weoponed, especially Barth: Steere, and continewed there untill xj of the clock, and then departed for that others fayled.

Next to Barth: Steeir these to be principall offendors
Richard Bradshawe miller
Edw: Bompas fuller
Robt: Burton mason
and James Bradshawe miller
We fynde these also offendors
John Stere the father and John his sonne
John Herne
Tho: Herne
Henry Redheade
Edw: Huffer
More doubtfull against these
Roger Ibell
Vincent Rancle
Willm: Dowley
Tho: Ingolsby
Willm: Baldwyn
Tho: Powell
Rich: Heath.

Roger Symons did before the tyme appointed discover this treason, and never used speach of consent But to understand and reveale the treason. The clerest way to proceade against these is to procead uppon the statut of 13 of her ma^ties^ raigne uppon which lawe the prentices of London were attainted for the like offence.

Upon that lawe they must have 2 witnesses uppon there arraigm^t^ or their owne confession, and be proceaded against within five moneths.

Against the first five or so many of them as shall be thought fitt to be attainted there is apparaunt matter This proceading must be before the end of March next for then the 6 moneths expire within which tyme the assises will fall.